Orbis

A Journal of World Affairs

Volume 39, Number 4, Fall 1995

Exclusive Interview: ROC President Lee Teng-hui

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Timothy L. Thomas

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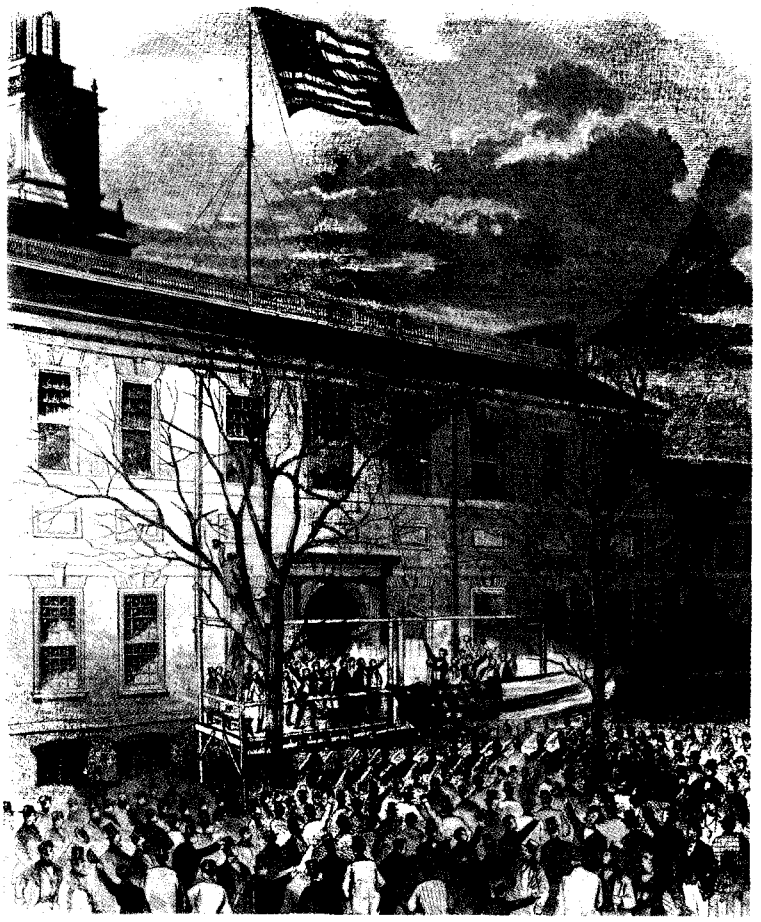

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Editor's Column

In the Spring issue we said goodbye to Manuscript Editor Virginia Montijo. This time we say hail and farewell to Thomas Eckmier, who filled in selflessly and expertly during our search for a permanent replacement. Tom has passed the bar examination and desires a career in legal publishing. The firm who lands him will be fortunate indeed.

Our new manuscript editor has already proven her worth. Shaynee Gray Snider graduated Phi Beta Kappa in English from Pomona College and has studied William Blake at Oxford. She comes to us from Northwestern University, where she took a master's degree in journalism concentrating in magazine production. The journal will benefit from her skill and good judgment, and we think our authors will find it a pleasure to work with her.

In These Pages

"War is as much a punishment to the punisher as to the sufferer," wrote Thomas Jefferson to a friend.[1] Twenty years after the fall of Saigon, it is apparent that the Vietnam War punished all who took part, save for a small cadre of Communist tyrants in Hanoi. The United States paid huge human, financial, and political costs, only to fail in the end. The Vietnamese people, North and South, suffered catastrophic losses of life, property, and freedoms. Nor did the Communist victory avail the Soviet Union, whose expensive Third World adventures may only have hastened its collapse, or China, which quickly resumed its historic role as Vietnam's enemy after 1975. Moreover, the memories, bitterness, and institutional effects of the Vietnam War continue to vex Americans, while the Vietnamese people, whether in exile or in thrall at home, still await deliverance.

That is why we find it so difficult to answer the plea that Americans bury the past and begin to think of Vietnam as a country, not a war. Perhaps we should, but it is not easy to do so as long as the heirs of Ho Chi Minh are in power, the POW/MIA issue drags on, and our domestic debate over the Vietnam War is serially rekindled, most recently by Robert S. McNamara's abstruse *mea culpa* and President Clinton's controversial decision in July 1995 to normalize diplomatic relations with Hanoi. We do not expect to bury the past in one cluster of articles, but we do believe that only by immersing ourselves in the past and telling the truth, as hindsight allows us to see it, can we begin to think wisely about

[1] Thomas Jefferson, letter to Tench Coxe, May 1794, in *Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations*, ed. Robert Debs Heinl, Jr., (Annapolis, Md: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1966), p. 344.

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the next phase of U.S.-Vietnamese relations. To be sure, our ally lost the war, but Hanoi lost the peace, and the ball is again in our court.

In these pages we offer six perspectives on the United States and Vietnam now—and then. To begin with, the Vietnam veteran who happens also to edit this journal recalls for the first time in print his own disillusionment with the conduct of the war, and describes the profound and irreversible changes that war visited on American government and society. Next, we hear the voices usually missing in our catharses over the Vietnam War: those of the Vietnamese themselves. Nguyen Thi Lien Hang, a young American student, makes poignant use of oral history in her account of those Vietnamese forced not once, but twice, to leave the graves of their ancestors and finally their native land. Thirdly, Adam Garfinkle gives us a sneak preview of his new book analyzing the effectiveness of the anti–Vietnam War movement. It is a revisionist bombshell that spares neither hawk nor dove.

Angelo Codevilla, the new director of the international relations program at Boston University, then bridges the gap between "then" and "now" by redefining the Vietnam conflict as an American civil war and tracing a direct line between McNamara's confessed defeatism in the sixties and Clinton's embrace of Hanoi this summer. Finally, we append the official statements of Clinton and Senator Robert Dole concerning the decision to recognize the Vietnamese regime.

Another Asian conundrum left over from the cold war is the contest of euphemisms between Taiwan and mainland China. Are they "one China with two governments" or "one China with two systems" or "two Chinas" for all practical purposes or "one China and one Taiwan"? Since winning overdue recognition for its spectacular growth and democratization, the Republic of China on Taiwan has launched a full-court press to obtain diplomatic standing with foreign governments and international organizations. But Beijing continues to insist that the ROC on Taiwan is nothing but a rebellious province, and threatens diplomatic or economic retaliation on any country that nods in Taipei's direction. In these pages, Dr. Jaw-ling Joanne Chang describes the tortuous process by which the Clinton administration arrived at a "new" policy regarding Taiwan that satisfied no one and helped to precipitate this summer's diplomatic imbroglio with Beijing. FPRI's president, Harvey Sicherman, then engages the author of Taiwan's "velvet revolution," President Lee Teng-hui, in an exclusive interview.

In addition, Timothy L. Thomas of the Foreign Military Studies Office at Fort Leavenworth enriches our ongoing inquiry into the future of Russia with a survey of the splintering process at work in the Russian army and its possible impact on politics. Jim Lederman reports from Jerusalem on the financial imperatives that are driving the Middle East peace process. Irving Louis Horowitz's review essay peers under the rocks that hid American Communists. And "Poor Richard" Saunders, acid tongue in cheek, marvels at the skill with which NATO's leaders have contrived to ruin the most successful multilateral alli-

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ance in history. Oh, one thing more: don't make up your mind about the wisdom of normalization with Hanoi until you've read this issue's "Auguries."

Night Thoughts of an I.R. Professor

In the seventh grade (dare I confess, 1958?) my social studies teacher picked me to argue one side in a classroom debate: "Resolved, that the People's Republic of China should be admitted to the United Nations." I did not object. In fact, I hadn't a fact or opinion to steer me to either side of the case, despite our current perception that school children back in the fifties were terrified daily by tales of communist bogeymen. So I took refuge in the glib argument to the effect that we couldn't pretend that 600 million Chinese (or however many there were then) just didn't exist, and added a pious appeal to the American principle of representation. I think I lost the debate by vote of the class, and the memory would make me blush were it not for the fact that our national debate over China policy seems hardly more profound today, and that our greatest Sinologists and diplomats proffer diametrically opposed interpretations, forecasts, and recommendations.

Nor are the Chinese much better at reading our behavior, despite their reputation for sagacity. Their ruling elites are singularly arrogant as measured by the norms of Western diplomacy. They have little grasp of the tensions and cross-currents inherent in the policy-making process of democratic nations. And they display little sympathy for the fact that barbarians, too, need to save face in the eyes of their people.

That said, we Americans must confess that our policies toward Beijing over the past three years have been, at best, confusing. We don't want bad relations with China, yet everything Washington does seems to bring them about. Is it simple incompetence on the part of the administration? Or the fact that we are trying to achieve contradictory goals? Or just that the timing of our initiatives has been bad? Most likely, all three. But China's rulers are not given to chalking up insults from foreigners as gaffes to be excused or ignored. They either take offense, or they take advantage.

So let us set aside our homespun belief in the innocence of American motives and instead consider our policies from Beijing's perspective. At various times over the span of a mere thirty months, Clinton administration officials have gone to China, hat in hand, begging for contracts; threatened to impose sanctions over unjust Chinese trade practices; and threatened to remove China's most-favored-nation status as a result of human rights violations. Over the same span, administration officials have plumped for an Asian-Pacific security regime, courted China's cooperation in the North Korean nuclear crisis, hinted that China was in fact the primary potential security problem in East Asia, threatened sanctions again in retaliation for Chinese missile sales abroad, and even seized a Chinese ship on the high seas only to find that no "contraband" was aboard. Again over the same span, the administration reaffirmed the strict "one-

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China" policy it inherited regarding the Republic of China on Taiwan, then announced it was reviewing that policy, then put off the review, then went ahead with a list of policy changes that (in Beijing's eyes) upgraded American relations with Taipei. Then Secretary of State Warren Christopher promised the Chinese that ROC president Lee would not be allowed to visit the United States, whereupon Clinton proceeded to extend Lee a visa. Finally, Clinton proceeded to establish full diplomatic relations with China's feisty neighbor to the south, Vietnam, at the very moment when Sino-American relations were at their nadir, and columnists wrote of Vietnam's potential value should a "containment policy" be needed against China.

It seems as if the Clinton people conceived of a new Asian order—or two or three of them—back in 1992–93, assumed into existence the sort of China that order called for, and got miffed when China refused to play the role assigned to it. It reminds me of one of the two best magazine covers of recent years—*The New Republic*'s cartoon designed to accompany an article by Arthur Waldron. It showed George Bush depositing the white cartons of a take-out Chinese meal on the table and turning to call to his wife, "Hey Bar', let's bring out the *good* China!" American statesmen have been dreaming of the power to do that since John Hay. (By the way, the other best cover was the *National Review*'s cartoon of Rush Limbaugh standing in front of Dole, Kemp, and other Republicans decked out like Victorian members of Parliament. The portly Limbaugh, his thumb hooked in his waistcoat, lives up to his billing as "The Leader of the Opposition.")

Happily, none of Clinton's tiffs with China is all that serious; none touches on the respective states' vital interests. But the zigs and zags in American policy would annoy countries far smaller and less prideful than China. What is more, Beijing is on pins and needles just now, wondering who will grab power in the Communist dynasty following Deng's death, or whether the dynasty will survive. So far no major Chinese player has seen any advantage in appeasing the "hegemonic" Americans, nor is one likely to do so anytime soon. So it behooves Mr. Clinton and his Republican challengers to devote rather more time than they have heretofore to deciding exactly what American policy ought to be, then stating it in January 1997 (first secretly in Beijing, and later in public) in the most crystal-clear terms, then holding to it. We need not kowtow, and we certainly don't owe the "butchers of Tienanmen Square" a thing. But we do owe *China*—the greatest and oldest nation on earth—the courtesy of a serious, coherent, and consistent foreign policy, however engaged or aloof it may be.

Now, what are the implications of that train of thought for Vietnam? Do we owe the Vietnamese nation full diplomatic relations, whatever we think of the "butchers of Hanoi"? If so, should we not also normalize with Pyongyang and Havana? After all, "you can't just pretend that 70 million people don't exist." That's right, 70 million, which makes Vietnam the twelfth-largest country in the *world*, something a recent article by Allan E. Goodman first

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brought to my attention. Perhaps all the *realpolitisch* arguments for normalizing with Hanoi have weight. Now that China is no longer an ally, but a geopolitical wildcard, close ties to Hanoi may be useful. Now that Cambodia is sorted out (one hopes), our sharpest dispute with Hanoi has dissolved, and all Southeast Asia may be pacified. Moreover, capitalist penetration might well push Vietnam on the road to liberalization. It certainly is a huge potential market. And we certainly ought not to hold our foreign policy hostage to the domestic cleavages of the sixties.

Those arguments might well be convincing from the mouth of a Nixon or Truman, someone whose geopolitical sense we trusted—or a president who was a Vietnam veteran. But we know very well that Clinton and Christopher, in their formative years at least, disparaged all foreign policy based on power politics and capitalist "greed," or even the notion that "we can't pretend people don't exist"—they were quite prepared, for instance, to denounce U.S. policy when it was a matter of "engaging" obnoxious *right*-wing regimes like South Africa's. That is why Clinton is the wrong man to close the book on the Vietnam War. In fact, he can't do it. For the only argument he can make on behalf of recognizing Hanoi, barring signal hypocrisy, is that the Vietnam War was wrong and it's time we "made it up" to the other side.

So Clinton's motives are suspect; his authority absent. And worst of all, he used the cardinal weasel word, "appropriate," twice in his brief Vietnam speech.

After two and a half years, he still doesn't get it.

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POLITICAL ISSUES

MICHAEL KIDRON AND RONALD SEGAL

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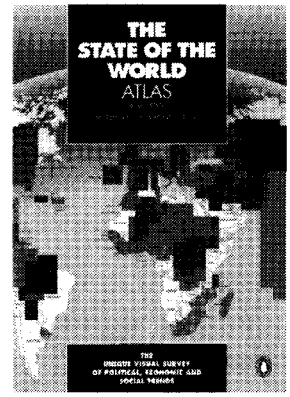

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Poor Richard's Almanack

by R. Saunders

Alliance Unwound

These Blessings, Reader, may
Heav'n grant to thee;
A faithful Friend, equal in Love's
degree;
Land fruitful, never conscious of
the Curse,
A liberal Heart and never-failing
Purse;
A smiling Conscience, a contented
mind;
A temp'rate Knowledge with true
Wisdom join'd . . .[1]

In my time I could not fathom how Europe's mighty empires, their gorges stuffed with stolen provinces and colonies, always managed to throw away their hard-won booty in yet another cycle of war. Their mishaps, however, were the manufactures of greed and miscalculation; they could never have understood a policy fashioned *only* of miscalculation. That is why future historians of your post–cold war period, gentle reader, are bound to register astonishment. They will write in awe of the leaders of the Atlantic Alliance, who on the morrow of their victory over the Soviet Union, did not count their blessings, friendships, or conscience, but instead cast aside "true Wisdom."

Sin—or blunder? Whichever, they erred first through exaggeration. The Soviets' demise was due rather less to a storming of their ramparts by the West and rather more to the Soviet legions rising up from the trenches and going home. That this happened peacefully owed much to the statecraft displayed by the West. But alas! In the white light of deliverance, the leaders of the West hyperbolized their achievement, proclaiming, "We won! We won!" instead of the more sober and accurate, "Thank God, they lost!" Their publics, in turn, came to believe that all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds, and anticipated an era of effortless, cheap foreign policy. Paradoxically, the villainy of Saddam Hussein only fostered this expectation: no more villains in Europe, only in lesser lands without the law.

One good exaggeration deserved another. So, post-communist Russia was promptly ordained a partner in peace even before the stunned rulers and ruled of Muscovy could collect their political wits. These excesses of imagination rendered NATO quite obsolete in the minds of the

[1] Benjamin Franklin, *Poor Richard: The Almanacks for the Years 1733–1758* (Garden City, N.Y.: International Collectors Library), p. 120.

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public, some pundits, and, worst of all, politicians. In fact, both history and the facts of life in Moscow suggested that Russia still bore careful watching. A means of residual deterrence, albeit at lower levels of force, made sense. After all, the fire department is not disbanded just because the fire has been extinguished.

False premises, in turn, produce false conclusions. So it was that a new administration in Washington promised a domestic presidency and staffed itself with those who had only a shaky grasp of the link between force and diplomacy. These new men (and women) chose the United Nations, not the "obsolete" alliance, to be the instrument of American policy. But as Somalia and other mishaps soon proved, the United Nations offered no strength and no cover. At length they awoke to the fact that their brave new world was neither brave nor new, and embarked—too late, it would seem—on a feverish search for a "new role" for NATO.

The worst of their slogans was "out of area or out of business." It assumed that the "old" NATO—designed to "keep the Russians out, the Germans down, and the Americans in"—was redundant, and implied that the Alliance, to be relevant, had to be dragged from its moorings. After all, designing new world orders is a playful substitute for hard work and clear thinking, those banes of the striped-pants fraternity.

What they gave us first was the "Partnership for Peace," in the fashion of men who know they need to "do something" but know not what that "something" may be. So PFP struggled along for a year on the idea that Russia might actually join NATO, even though everyone knew that the Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, and others wanted to join NATO themselves to escape forever Russia's embrace. After all, NATO alone had solved the German problem, the Russian problem, and the American problem (isolationism). But Washington's best minds, convinced that NATO *was* obsolete but afraid to say so, sought only to give the appearance of leadership. Thus, they said to the Russians "you're not out"; to East Central Europe "you might well get in—someday"; and to our allies "we're still with you (sort of)."

"Havering" (hovering and wavering), as the British say, is a hoary art in diplomacy. But in Bosnia, lives, not just time, were being expended. First, Washington urged NATO allies to use force to back up the United Nations, but would risk no troops of its own. Then NATO command urged force against the Serbs to protect the U.N. "Protective Force." But the British and French governments often urged the same NATO *not* to strike, so that the Serbs would not retaliate against the French and British "peace-keepers" in the U.N. force.

While NATO officials tried to sort all this out, the prestige of the most powerful alliance in history was cast away by a Japanese civil servant acting on behalf of a U.N. peacekeeping mission with no peace to keep. Thus did "out of area" combine with "out of mind" to render NATO "out of action."

Would that greed *were* behind it all: that would at least be explicable. But folly alone has gone far to tear the fabric so painstakingly woven between the United States and

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its allies since 1945. Europeans have no confidence that Washington knows how, or even wants, to run the show; they are confident only that they cannot run it themselves. Washington has lost faith in the efficacy of collective action but lacks the reason (or strength) for unilateral actions. Unable to move the Western alliance, its foreign policy is rapidly becoming theoretical.

But NATO may yet find salvation, and from an unexpected quarter. In a wonderful irony, the new Gaullist presidency of Jacques Chirac has emerged as the strongest Western government at the table. Its strength, of course, derives partly from the weakness in Washington, London, and Bonn. Yet Chirac and his men are newly in search of a vehicle to carry French interests. The Franco-German alliance is uncertain because a unified Germany clearly outranks France as an economic power. But as one observer remarked, "it will be a German Europe or a European Europe." A rabid, old-fashioned Gaullist might be tempted to find the answer in a new version of the old Franco-Russian alliance. But to offset German power and to secure the political leadership of the European Union, Chirac needs not the weakness of Russia but the comfort of a stronger NATO, which at the moment only he can provide.

So let us consider the French. The Franco-American alliance, our oldest, the personal pride of one Benjamin Franklin, and the connection that ultimately secured American independence, has long been cold, especially since de Gaulle's time. But after thirty years of unnerving ambiguities the French are back, and not a moment too soon. It will be up to France to instill in the Alliance a new sense of self-worth until the Americans clear the cobwebs out of their heads and rediscover reality.

Who does more damage—to himself and to others—than those who pay dearly for lessons and then promptly forget them? Let us recall, in this fiftieth year since victory in World War II, that Churchill described his fifth book of memoirs as the story of how the postwar democracies promptly resumed the follies that had nearly cost them their liberty. Might NATO still prove Churchill wrong? If so, someone must step forward soon, "a temp'rate Knowledge with true Wisdom" to join. Mr. Clinton, meet Jacques Chirac.

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VIETNAM:
NO DISCHARGE FROM THAT WAR

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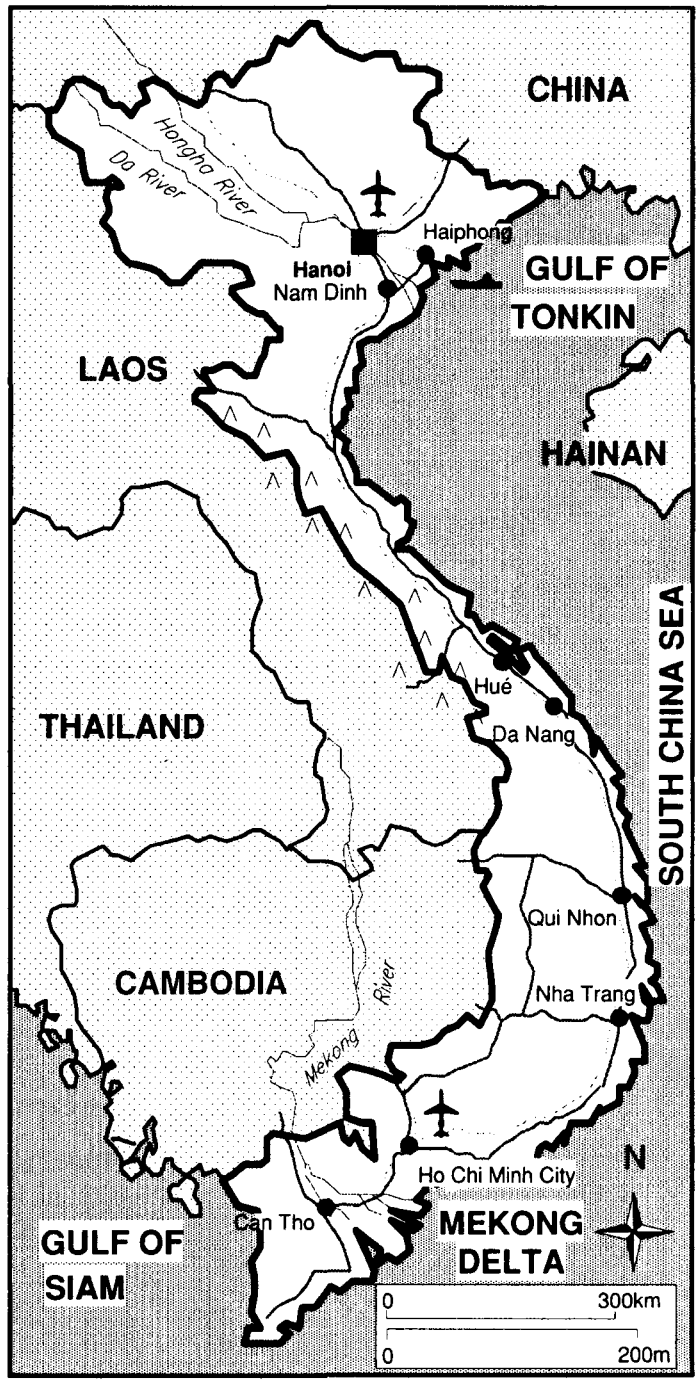

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No Discharge from That War

The Vietnamization of America

by Walter A. McDougall

The following is adapted from the R. Patricia Trickey Lecture in American Studies delivered at the Agnes Irwin School, Rosemont, Pennsylvania, in October 1994.

All in all, a good year for war buffs, said humorist Tom Lehrer of 1964–65, noting, respectively, the hundredth, twentieth, and fiftieth anniversaries of the end of the Civil War and World War II, and the beginning of World War I. In 1994–95, we have been binging on the fiftieth anniversaries of World War II victories, from D-Day to V-J Day; the twenty-fifth anniversaries of the first moon landing and Woodstock Festival; and the twentieth anniversary of the fall of Saigon.

Twenty-five years ago this month, I was standing knee-deep in muddy water at a particularly nasty jungle base in South Vietnam. When the waters continued to rise, we were ordered to empty all our sandbags, slog all our gear to the helicopter pad, and wait to be evacuated. Only, the choppers didn't come—and didn't come. The sun was going down. We were drenched and covered with filth. We had dismantled our defenses and packed up our weapons. We were naked if the enemy chose to attack. Few twenty-two-year-olds ever know despair, but we were all very near it when the choppers finally roared through the rain to rescue us, just as darkness fell.

Darkness. Never have I experienced such utter blackness, and utter silence, as in the jungle on a moonless night. It made going to the latrine an adventure, especially since, as often was the case on dark nights, the enemy was up and about, somewhere, out there.

I would never have guessed that a quarter of a century must pass before I talked about Vietnam, in public or in private, or that it would finally happen at a women's prep school in suburban Philadelphia. But I think it is high time for me and all veterans, and all Americans of my generation, to take stock of the fact that that war still sputters inside of us—that there is no discharge from that war. All soldiers expect to get a discharge from the military sooner or later—preferably an honorable discharge—and then get on with their lives. But

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something about Vietnam does not let go. Do I still have dreams about Vietnam, like so many other soldiers? Yes, occasionally. But mine are not flashbacks of combat, scary or violent. I simply dream that I'm still in Vietnam, long after I was supposed to go home; because of some bureaucratic army screw-up, my orders haven't come through. Or that I did go home, but somehow the war is still going on after ten, twenty years, and I get called up from the reserves and sent back! In other words, my deep-down fear is simply that there's no discharge from that war.

In how many ways is that true of America as a whole? In how many ways were our national politics, society, and culture permanently changed by Vietnam? Historians speak of Lyndon Johnson Americanizing the war, and of Richard Nixon's later strategy of Vietnamizing the war. But in the end, it was America itself that underwent Vietnamization. Later on, I want to summarize some of the ways I think that occurred. But first, I'm going to do something that I've never done before. I'm going to tell a few war stories.

Soldiers need some reassurance before going off to war. We got none.

I first knew something was wrong with the Vietnam War by about 1966 or 1967—by the simple fact that the United States had not won. When LBJ escalated U.S. involvement in 1964–65, my freshman year in college, we all assumed that the war, or conflict, or police action (or whatever the government chose to call it) would be over long before we graduated. By the time our senior year arrived in 1967–68, it was clear that it wouldn't be over, and that we were going to be caught up. It was not a political thing for most of us; the protest movement did not hit sleepy Amherst College until after my time. Indeed, what bothered me was not American *motives* in Vietnam, not the fact that we were there, but the fact that we weren't winning. Nor did I consider dodging the draft. When deferments for graduate students were abolished, I resigned myself to serving in the army after college, and I even had the naive idea that whether I ended up supporting or opposing the war, my voice would count for something because I had really been there. Moreover, by enlisting instead of waiting to be drafted, I could choose my branch and thus avoid getting stuck in the infantry. In any case, the enlistment was only for two years. I never dreamed that there would be no discharge from that war.

"Vietnam orientation" training deepened my sense that something was wrong. First, we sat in a huge auditorium to listen, not to some would-be George Patton psyching us up in front of a giant flag, but to a pot-bellied old Southern sergeant, who cried, "Awright, you mens, listen up. Y'all will now git oree-en-tated to Vit-nam with this letcher on the struck-shoor of Con-foosh-ian societies, which is sorta like th' Army chain o' command!" Next, we toured a model strategic hamlet, which we were assured was V.C.-proof. We were told what to do in an ambush—don't duck for cover, charge into their guns!—and then were warned about booby traps like the razor-sharp punji stakes, not to mention a menagerie of poisonous snakes, scorpions, and spiders sufficient to daunt a toxicologist. There were no pep talks, no positive reinforcements, which

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by then even smug college graduates like myself were thirsting for. After all, a soldier needs some reassurance before going off to war. We got none.

No wonder they locked us up in a warehouse at the Oakland Army Base for forty-eight hours before our departure. Our morale was so bad they feared we would go AWOL. Outside the Oakland base, protesters from Berkeley alternately appealed to us as victims of the military-industrial complex and damned us as "baby-killers." Nor did it help morale that soldiers flew over to Vietnam on chartered commercial jets, complete with stewardesses and pop music: "I'm Leavin' on a Jet Plane." They locked us up again when we refueled in Honolulu (which I could well understand), but not at Wake Island. Presumably we had by then reached a point of no return.

That something was wrong struck me again at the terminal of the Philippines's historic Clark Air Base, graced with a giant mural of Douglas MacArthur. I stepped out onto the tarmac and for the first time smelled the distinctive damp odor of Asia and gazed at the tropical forest ringing the horizon. Something did not feel right, and then I knew what: it was the American flag which seemed out of place. And not for any political reason. It was just disorienting to spy the Stars and Stripes in that alien land.

Something else struck me as wrong when we landed in Vietnam and were bused to the giant base at Long Binh—this time because nothing seemed alien at all! What we saw from the bus was a veritable prefabricated American town stretching for miles, with newly paved four-lane highways and permanent, multistory buildings. It was as if the army itself knew that victory would not be coming anytime soon. But stranger still was the relative absence of Vietnamese. I was in Vietnam, but all I saw were Americans, except for the hooch-girls trucked in each morning to work in the laundries and mess halls. The only other contact I would have with the inhabitants were the occasional messages the North Vietnamese sent, by rockets and mortars, to remind us that we were on somebody else's turf.

After a week, I was assigned by chance as a replacement to an artillery battery of the New Hampshire National Guard that had been called up after the Tet Offensive in 1968. Some of the guardsmen had challenged their call-up in court on the grounds that no war had been declared. One of those who did—an antiwar activist in uniform—was severely wounded by a mortar barrage. The captain commanding our battery, a solid Granite Stater of French-Canadian extraction, was killed while serving as a forward observer.

On my first day with the battery, I knew again that something was wrong. I was learning to use the radios, and after awhile we heard a chatter of Vietnamese on our radio frequency, or "push." The soldier training me was a genial, small-town fellow about thirty years old, with a family and job back in New Hampshire. He was not any sort of redneck. And yet, when he heard those Vietnamese—South Vietnamese—on the radio, he keyed his mike, gave me a wink, and said, "Ditty mow, gook!" meaning, "Get lost, get off our push." Obviously it was common practice for Americans (black as well as white) to treat even our Vietnamese allies with rudeness and contempt. It was as if we

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owned the air waves, owned the war, and the Vietnamese were either the enemy or just in the way.

I assumed (perhaps wrongly) that "ditty mow" was a corruption of the French *dites moi* (tell me, talk to me). If so, I cannot imagine how it came to mean exactly the opposite: "shut up." But barracks French, a hangover from the First Indochina War, formed a large part of Vietnam slang, such as "boo-coo" for *beaucoup* (many) and "coo-shay" for *couchez* (going with a prostitute). More slang was based on the radio code for letters of the alphabet—Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, etc. So BS became "Bravo Sierra," and Viet Cong (VC) became "Victor Charlie," or just "Charlie," or—if you were feeling sentimental towards the enemy—"Chuck." America was "the world," civilian airliners overhead were "freedom birds." To be killed was to get "wasted," to bomb a village was to "waste it." As for adjectives, everything in Vietnam was either "Number One," meaning the best, or "Number Ten," meaning the pits.

What was Number One to many U.S. soldiers was grass, pot, weed. I knew again that something was wrong with this war when a corporal took me into a hooch my first week and offered me a cigarette from a pack of Marlboros—a perfect pack complete with U.S. tax stamp on the bottom. Only it wasn't tobacco, but prime Laotian marijuana dipped in liquid opium. I was amazed, and asked him what it cost. "Five bucks," he said. "Five bucks a joint?" I asked. "No, five bucks a pack!" Now, believe it or not, I had never tried pot before. But I tried it then, and I *did* inhale. I remember giggling uncontrollably, for how long I can't say. Then I passed out, and the next thing I knew it was hours later, almost dusk. The corporal was long gone. I could not remember for some moments who I was, where I was, or where I was supposed to be. That loss of control I experienced so terrified me that, from that day to this, I have never been tempted to touch drugs again. But what terrified me even more was the realization that a significant portion of the U.S. army in Vietnam was constantly stoned. For those who remained addicts when they returned to the States, there would be no discharge from that war.

We were known as the Jungle Battery, a special artillery unit of six howitzers—three 105 millimeters and three of our 155s. We spent half our time in base camp and half our time in the boonies in tiny fire-support bases bulldozed out of the jungle by combat engineers. We fired in support of a half-dozen or so Special Forces, the Green Berets, who served as the officers for a battalion of Cambodian mercenaries. Their mission was to go on reconnaissance sweeps in search of enemy strongholds. In fact, I heard President Nixon declare on the radio that we had no mercenaries in South Vietnam at the very time my life depended on them. But they also had good reason to volunteer. For these were ethnic Cambodians who happened to live inside South Vietnam, and Vietnamese consider Cambodians racial inferiors. So rather than get drafted and mistreated in a Vietnamese army—North or South—they preferred signing up with the Green Berets. Still, we felt sorry for them. The Cambods refused army chow and instead received bags of rice and live chickens which they strangled and cooked on the perimeter. They also picked through our garbage, never bathed, and never cleaned up their own refuse.

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Most disturbing was the fact that the Cambods refused to protect themselves. Some Green Berets thought they were lazy because they would throw away their packs and flak jackets while on patrol, and couldn't be bothered to fill sandbags or dig trenches. But their habits were partly cultural. One Cambod who knew some English told us he did not bother to dig in because his Buddha would protect him. (They all wore wooden Buddha charms on strings around their necks, and when there was incoming fire, they would put their Buddhas in their mouths.) "Wait a minute," asked a GI, "what about your buddy last week who got wasted? His Buddha didn't protect him!" "Oh," said the Cambod, "His Buddha Number Ten Buddha. *My* Buddha Number One Buddha." These troops were all that stood between us artillerymen and the enemy-infested jungle.

I was lucky. My tour was relatively quiet, proving the dictum that war is 95 percent boredom punctuated by 5 percent terror. But I did get a dose of the latter. It happened at a remote location perhaps a hundred yards in diameter, called Fire-Support Base Ann. There the Special Forces got their wish: they bumped into a whole regiment of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regulars. Our Cambods got badly chewed up, and when the survivors limped in to the base, the Green Berets told us to prepare for a fight because the base was bound to be attacked after dark. The first rounds landed, and the siren sounded at about 10 P.M. My shift, one officer and five men, was off duty and thus trapped in our sleeping bunker, which consisted of a metal culvert layered with sand bags. There was barely room inside for the six canvas cots, so the setting was claustrophobic beyond words. We could do nothing but put on our helmets and flak jackets and sit, while explosions blasted all around us. Worst of all was the noise, the screeching whine of rockets that flew so fast and burned so hot that they could melt their way through two layers of sandbags and kill everyone inside by sheer concussion.

The violence without and our silence within were terrifying.

The violence without and our silence within were terrifying. I don't know what the other men did to contain their fear, but I was moved for the first time in my adult life to pray. But I was not brought up religious, and the only prayer that came to me was one I had learned in my Latin and music classes: *Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis, et dona nobis pacem.* "O, Lamb of God . . . grant us Thy peace."

Then the world turned yellow, and we were deafened by the loudest crack of all. I may have blacked out momentarily, but then I remember looking into the faces of the others—something we had all avoided until then—and sharing the realization that we were still alive. Then someone broke the silence with some good old army cursing: "Blank! Those blankety-blanking blankety-blanks almost blew our blanking blank away." The next morning, two of the guys set to digging, like ghouls, in search of the nosecone of that rocket. They found their souvenir at the bottom of a hole about eighteen inches deep, just six inches from the edge of our culvert, and exactly on the other side of the wall from where I was sitting.

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When the shelling stopped, we feared a ground attack. And the enemy did probe our perimeter. So the Cambods and our artillerymen fired off every round they had until an air force jet arrived to drop napalm outside our perimeter. We received a trickle of new ammunition the next day but fully expected a big attack come nightfall, an attack that was bound to overrun us. It sounds melodramatic now, but I sat down that day to write letters to family and friends, just in case.

I was on duty that night, waiting nervously in the control bunker for trouble to start. As usual, we had a transistor radio tuned to the armed forces station: soul music for the blacks, country and western for the rednecks, and top 40 hits for the rest of us. It was about 9 P.M. when a news announcer broke into the music with a report too good to be true. News flash from Hanoi: "Ho Chi Minh, the leader of North Vietnam, is dead. And to mourn his passing, the Communists have declared a forty-eight-hour cease fire effective immediately. To repeat. . . ." So there would be no attack that night, and ever since, I've had a warm spot in my heart for old Uncle Ho. At least he knew when to die.

By the time the war resumed, we were not only resupplied but reinforced by the 1st Air Cavalry Division. Colonels and generals descended on our little base, and a fleet of helicopters arrived carrying U.S. soldiers. By day they would search for that NVA regiment. By night the B-52s would bomb to smithereens all suspected enemy locations. We couldn't sleep for the thunder of the bombs. Then one night while I was on duty, a rumor sped around the camp: a squad of the 1st Air Cav had been *forgotten*, left out in the jungle by the helicopters, and already B-52s were blasting their location. It was the worst screw-up imaginable, and needless to say, as soon as morning broke, choppers took off in search of the abandoned squad. They reached the pick-up point of the night before, hoping that someone might still be alive. And there they were—there they *all* were, waving their hands. Perhaps they were lucky. Maybe the bombs had fallen a quarter mile away, or maybe they had found cover at the bottom of craters left by the B-52s. But the conclusion I drew was that something very serious was wrong with this war: that all the firepower in our arsenal could never extinguish a guerilla force spread out over hundreds of square miles of jungle, a force expert in the digging of underground tunnels and bunkers, and always free to run to the neutral sanctuaries of Laos and Cambodia. From that day on, I ceased to think of our own artillery as mighty weapons of attack and instead thought of them only as defensive weapons that might help spare our own lives until our year was up.

Until our year was up. . . . Nothing so illustrates the poor judgment and craven leadership of the Johnson administration and the top army generals as their policy of limiting the Vietnam tour of duty to one year (six months for officers). No army in history has ever been sent into battle with the promise that it would be sent home in 365 days, whether or not the war had been won. That is no way to motivate soldiers to fight fiercely and win. That is the way to motivate soldiers to take no risks, invest no emotional capital in the cause for which they're supposedly fighting, and, indeed, resent the fact that they have to be there even for one day! The short-timer syndrome was doubly

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defeating. First, it meant that as soon as soldiers began to become real veterans, battle-hardened and wise, they were sent home and replaced by another batch of rookies. Second, it meant that the closer any soldier got to his DEROS (date of expected return from overseas), the more risk-averse he became. I saw men get so agoraphobic toward the end of their time that they did not want to walk from the bunker to the mess tent for fear the enemy might choose that moment to lob in a mortar round. And with good reason. A truck carrying six members of our sister battery was en route to Long Binh when it struck a mine. All six were killed one day before their year was up.

My year was up in February 1970. I made it to Long Binh safely, only to come down with a temperature of 104° and miss my freedom bird. The doctors slapped me into the malaria ward and proceeded to draw blood from me six times a day for eight days, testing for the malaria they were certain was there until my arm looked like that of a heroin junkie. I took ice-cold showers when the fever was up, read J.R.R. Tolkein's *Lord of the Rings* when the fever was down, and wondered why there was no discharge from this war. On the ninth day, a new doctor looked at my chart and said, "Son, I don't know what's wrong with you, but I'm gonna shoot you up with tetracyclene and see what happens." Sixteen hours later, I was cured and on my way home.

Only, home was as lonely as 'Nam, perhaps more so. In graduate school, among my old friends, even among family, my status as a Vietnam veteran was a source of embarrassment to them and to me, as if my presence were a judgment upon the hawks who made me go and the doves who ducked having to go. It was as if Vietnam veterans were both morally superior *and* morally inferior to everyone else, at the same time.

Our catharsis was supposed to occur at the opening of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 1982. I happened to be in Washington, D.C., doing research, so I put on my old army jacket and marched with the New Hampshire contingent. All the way down Constitution Avenue I choked back my tears. All I wanted was to cry until all the grief and frustration were gone. But I was alone, and in public, so I choked back the tears enough to turn to the sparse crowds that lined the parade and try to shout "Thank you."

* * * * * * *

In what ways has America itself been Vietnamized? The subject could fill a large book, or several. Instead, let me propose a list of the more important ways in which the United States was profoundly altered by the Vietnam War. I attach no value judgments to them. I leave it to you to ponder whether these effects have been good, bad, ugly, or just ironic.

First out of the box was the professionalization of the armed forces following abolition of the draft. Now, national service, the privilege of bearing arms for one's country, has been a civic principle of democracies since ancient Greece and, in modern times, since the French and American revolutions. Free citizens of a republic—a *res publica* or "public thing"—obligated themselves to share the responsibility of defending and passing on their heritage of freedom to the next generation. But LBJ's decision to order a drafted army into a limited,

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undeclared, and unpopular guerilla war in which the security of American democracy was *not* at stake proved to be a capital blunder. So President Nixon, in hopes of defusing antiwar protests, ended the draft and, incidentally, extended the vote to eighteen-year-olds. Ever since then, conservatives and liberals alike have wondered whether this legacy of Vietnam is healthy or not. Today, young Americans—female or male—have no obligation to perform national service—military or civilian. And the United States, like the old monarchies of Europe, now has a professional career military hired by the taxpayers to do our fighting for us. Some experts fear that an unhealthy divergence of civil and military cultures is occurring, or that the military may acquire too much autonomy, especially under a president whose draft evasion undercuts his moral authority as commander in chief.

Secondly, our failure in Vietnam helped to sustain a congressional counterattack on the military prerogatives of the president. All through our history, Capitol Hill and the executive branch have battled for control over foreign policy. But the long national emergency that began with Pearl Harbor and World War II, then continued with the cold war, led to the greatest expansion of executive power since the Civil War. It made Congress profoundly uneasy: Congress was not even asked to declare wars anymore, just to vote the budgets that allowed the president to send forces anywhere on earth for his own reasons. A backlash was bound to come, and it came in the early 1970s, with an unpopular war dragging on, Nixon in the White House, and the Democrats with majorities in Congress. Future historians may well interpret Watergate as, among other things, part of this counterattack against the "imperial presidency" and what Senator J. William Fulbright called "the arrogance of power." For the attack on Nixon himself was matched by the War Powers Act limiting the right of a president to send U.S. forces overseas; Senator Frank Church's hearings and the resulting intelligence reforms that reined in the CIA and required a president to consult with congressional committees before approving covert operations; the Jackson-Vanik amendment and other legislative acts signalling the White House that, henceforth, it could not expect to take any major foreign initiatives without congressional input; and lastly, a congressional refusal to vote the money requested by the administration for military assistance to, for instance, Angola and (not least) South Vietnam. That meant that when the final Communist assault was launched, President Ford could not provide air support, or even ammunition, to South Vietnam as promised by Nixon at the time of the 1973 Paris Accords.

Since 1975, the struggle over foreign policy has continued. The Reagan administration recovered some of its freedom of action but also ran afoul of Congress in the Iran/*contra* affair. George Bush barely won congressional support for the war in the Persian Gulf, and Bill Clinton had a rocky road with Congress over his foreign policy even before the Republicans won their majority. Distrust of the executive, a legacy of the Vietnam War era, thus came full circle to vex a president who was anti–Vietnam War himself.

A third, and obvious, legacy is the "Vietnam syndrome," the reluctance of anyone—Congress, president, public, and media—to intervene in a conflict

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that seems to have the potential of becoming "another Vietnam." Bush declared that victory in the Gulf banished the syndrome forever. His obituary was premature. We still worry whether a Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, or North Korea might turn into an unwinnable quagmire, evidenced in the fact that all secretaries of defense and chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff since the 1970s have endorsed stringent conditions which must be met before U.S. forces should, in their judgment, be sent into battle.

A fourth way in which America was changed derives from the fact that, in Vietnam, the United States fielded the first fully integrated army in its history. Now, we know that Vietnam was traumatic for many blacks who had to serve, especially because of the criticism they received from their own civil rights leaders and radicals like the Black Panthers back home: "Why you fightin' this honky war? You jus' a black man sent by the white man to kill the yellow man." We know, too, that race relations within the army grew strained. But the fact of the matter is that, even though blacks were somewhat overrepresented in combat, more than three-quarters of our Vietnam army was white. And whatever tensions existed, the fact is that the Vietnam War was *the first* occasion in which thousands of whites and blacks were thrown into contact with one another, asked to work with one another, fight for one another, and rely on one another. That is why the Vietnam War was probably a great step forward for racial integration. What is more, Vietnam launched the careers of thousands of successful black officers and NCOs [non-commissioned officers], chief among them Colin Powell. Thousands of other black soldiers went to college under the GI Bill or built careers that their military service opened up for them, for instance in the police forces of America's cities.

The war we fought in Vietnam was not a criminal war.

But what of the soldiers and airmen who never came home? The POW/MIA issue is a fifth way in which the United States was Vietnamized. Not only do our relations with Vietnam still hang on whether Hanoi has accounted for all of our missing-in-action, but U.S. politics are still shaken by it. Ross Perot destroyed Bush's presidency primarily because he suspected that Bush, as vice president, had ignored or impeded the campaign on behalf of MIAs. Perot never forgave him. President Clinton normalized our relations with Hanoi but still is vulnerable on the issue for obvious reasons; one of his most formidable Democratic rivals, Senator Bob Kerrey (D.,Neb.), is a veteran sharply critical of Clinton's own handling of the POW/MIA issue.

Which in turn raises the broader question, "What did you do, or not do, in the sixties?" Statistically, non-veterans are a far larger voting bloc than veterans and their families. Only 40 percent of draft-age men served in the military during the Vietnam War. Only a quarter of those served in Vietnam, and only about one-eighth of those who served in Vietnam (about 1 percent of all draft-age men) saw serious combat. Nevertheless, I believe that a sixth measure of the Vietnamization of America is the continued relevance of whether or not a given candidate served in the military, or dodged the draft, or smoked pot, or dabbled in radical politics, or engaged in the more promiscuous activities

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of the sexual revolution. In a sense, the leadership qualifications of my entire generation are at stake, but the verdict is in the hands of voters drawn from every generation. When Bush named Dan Quayle his running mate, he was making a direct appeal to the baby boomers, for Quayle had avoided Vietnam by joining a National Guard unit that did not happen to be called up. And Clinton's own victory would seem to have removed from politics the issue of what-did-you-do-in-the-sixties.

But I am not sure the issue is dead. Should the Clinton administration collapse in part on matters of defense policy and/or "character" issues, then *other* 1960s war protesters may have a difficult time winning widespread support. The political future may well belong to the Kerreys and Powells after all.

How many other profound ways has America been Vietnamized? Our chronic budget deficits began in those years when LBJ opted for big military spending and big social spending, without raising taxes. Democrats and Republicans alike got "hooked" on deficit spending and never kicked the habit. American universities were changed in dozens of ways by Vietnam and the campus protests. Popular culture, once supportive of traditional values and national myths, shifted 180 degrees in the Vietnam era, in everything from Hollywood films to pop music. Just contrast John Wayne and Oliver Stone. The relationship between journalism and government likewise reversed itself. The adversarial, investigative journalism made famous by Watergate grew directly from LBJ's infamous credibility gap when reporters began to suspect that they weren't being told the truth about the Vietnam War. Point to any major institution in American society, and I expect you will find it altered, if not transformed, by that war from which there is no discharge.

But there is another, final Vietnamization of America: the one made by the Vietnamese people themselves, the thousands of refugees and courageous "boat people" who fled the Communists during and after the pitiful fall of Saigon in 1975. Like the returning veterans, the Vietnamese refugees were ignored by the American people; like the veterans, they were an embarrassing reminder of a nightmare we all wanted to forget. But those Vietnamese immigrants quietly went to work for themselves and their families, and for society at large by restoring one blighted urban neighborhood after another. I watched them do it in Oakland, California, and I've seen their children in class, where they are among the brightest and hardest-working students.

In my opinion, the war we fought in Vietnam was not a criminal war. Its motives, far from base, were shockingly altruistic. Never before in history had a great power spent so many lives and so much treasure so far away, with so little at stake for itself. In my opinion, it was the way the war was fought, as opposed to the war itself, that was Homeric, even biblical, in its hubris. And our penance will not cease for some years to come. For there will be no discharge from that war until all who fought against it, and all who fought in it, have suffered what Charles DeGaulle called the shipwreck of old age. The same was true of the Civil War, which continued to cast its shadow over American life until almost the turn of the twentieth century.

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But in time, in the twenty-first century, two or three new generations will have taken control of America's future. What great events will shape their consciousness, as Vietnam shaped ours? From what conflicts will those young people never be discharged? All we older folks can do is teach them the lessons we have learned and pray on their behalf, "Lead them not into temptation, put them not to the test," as we were put to a terrible test when barely out of our teens.

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No Discharge from That War

The Double Diaspora of Vietnam's Catholics

by Nguyen Thi Lien Hang

According to legend, Viet Nam was born of a spiritual union between Lac Long Quan, a powerful dragon from the mountains of the north, and Au Co, a mystical phoenix from the royal waters of the south. From their connection sprang one hundred sons and daughters, half of whom followed their father northward and half of whom trailed their mother southward. Apart, yet as one, the children knew tranquillity under the protection of their ancestors.

After many years, the mountains and oceans ceased to conceal the treasures of Viet Nam, and barbarians with grotesque masks and sharp swords came down from the north to conquer the land and its people. Vietnamese fought bravely and eventually forced the barbarians out of the luminous mountains of the north. But at length, new barbarians with strange features and exploding guns arrived by sea, in wave after wave. Again, after many hardships, the Vietnamese pushed them out. But this time the children of the dragon and the phoenix did not regain their harmony; instead, they turned against each other. Thus, in victory was defeat, and harmony was broken.

Vietnam's history is a long tale of resistance, combined with a quest for unity. It began in 208 B.C. when a Chinese warlord imposed his rule on the Red River valley, naming the province Nam Viet. The Han Chinese empire absorbed it a hundred years later, and in time the indigenous Vietnamese elites adopted Confucian social and political values, Chinese characters, and the Buddhist religion. Still, the Vietnamese struggled intermittently for a thousand years until finally, in 939 A.D., they regained their independence after the sound defeat of a Chinese army. Half a millennium of civil and foreign wars ensued until, in the fifteenth century, the Vietnamese achieved unity and strength sufficient to begin their great expansion southward, through battle and migration, to the Mekong River valley. In 1802 A.D. they achieved their manifest destiny: Vietnam within its present border, ruled by a single indigenous emperor.

But the Vietnamese enjoyed this condition for only seventy years; then the French arrived to colonize Indochina. And so another, even more devastating

Nguyen Thi Lien Hang, the daughter of a Catholic father and Buddhist mother, is a senior at the University of Pennsylvania. She left Vietnam as a baby, in 1975, with her eight brothers and sisters. The oral history presented in this article derives from interviews the author conducted with her father, Nguyen Thanh Quang, and her uncles, Nguyen Khac Chinh and Nguyen Khac Quang.

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century of struggle ensued, with challenges from all manner of foreign invaders: the French, the Japanese after 1940, the Chinese in 1945, the French again until 1954, and the Americans. But the final expulsion of foreigners, and the restoration of national unity in 1975, was not a victory in the minds of millions of Vietnamese. For the agents of that unity, the Communists of the north, had long since betrayed the cause for which they claimed to fight. Thus, the children of the dragon and the phoenix are still divided. The war is not over for the people of Vietnam, any more than it is for Americans.

Extended Hand/Clenched Fist

No Vietnamese people felt the Communists' betrayal more deeply than the Catholics.[1] Better educated and more urbane than the great majority of Vietnamese, these converts of French missionaries played a role disproportionate to their numbers. At the same time, they developed both superiority and inferiority complexes vis-à-vis their countrymen, who accused them of being elitist and haughty, collaborationist, and not wholly Vietnamese. Under the later decades of French rule, Catholics retreated into their own towns and villages to nurse their sense of rejection. But in 1945, an opportunity for full citizenship arrived when the French were displaced by the Japanese, and the Japanese in turn were defeated by Allied forces and Vietnamese guerillas. When the Viet Minh national movement declared independence in August of 1945, Catholics seized the chance to prove their loyalty by joining forces with Buddhists, Communists, and patriots of all stripes.

At that juncture, the Viet Minh did not claim to be a "party" at all, much less a Stalinist one. It was merely the Front for National Independence, open to all, for Ho Chi Minh knew the importance of building a broad base of support in order to achieve power in the name of nationalism. Moreover, he had to cajole or persuade the French and Allied victors to acquiesce in the decolonization of Indochina. Inasmuch as North Vietnamese Catholics numbered 1.6 million, or 18 percent of the population, and were of special concern to the French, Ho went out of his way to appeal to them. Catholics, in turn, yearned to trust him. On October 8, 1945, thirty thousand Catholics marched to the city of Vinh to show support for Ho's provisional government. But the Communists' discipline was still less than perfect. Despite Ho's pretense of toleration, Communist cadres (*can bo*) took to vandalizing churches and interrupting Sunday masses.[2] Ho responded with legal decrees such as that of September 20, 1945, threatening penalties for anyone who damaged churches or disturbed religious functions. He even chose the Catholics' National Day, the first Sunday in September, to

[1] Unless otherwise noted, the following description of the persecution of Vietnamese Catholics employs information from: Piero Gheddo, *The Cross and Bo-Tree: Catholics and Buddhists in Viet Nam* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1970).

[2] Harry Haas, *Viet Nam: The Other Conflict* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1971), p. 16.

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be Vietnam's Independence Day, and he sent a warm Christmas message to the archbishops of Phat Diem and Bui Chu.

The Catholics were naive and did not realize that Ho Chi Minh's sole motive was to obtain absolute power. He was, at that time, engaged in lengthy and delicate negotiations with Paris, and in effect held the Catholics hostage. When negotiations broke down, Ho's need to appear tolerant toward Catholics was replaced by a need to consolidate his power in the North and to prepare his people for war. Hence, a second phase of Viet Minh–Catholic relations began in 1947 under the slogan "extended hand/clenched fist." This phase opened with the first of several attempted assassinations of Bishop Le Huu Tu of Phat Diem. In another Catholic town, Bui Chu, Viet Minh shot their way into the bishop's headquarters. Catholic communities began to organize for self-defense, arming militias and establishing local magistracies under the leadership of their bishops. In October 1949, Ho's "clenched fist" tactic climaxed: he ordered a military assault on Phat Diem. The besieged Catholics were rescued by paratroopers from the Emperor Bao Dai, the "puppet ruler" set up by the French. Only then did the Catholic bishops and magistrates swear allegiance to Bao Dai, as opposed to Ho Chi Minh. Simultaneously, the Vatican threatened the excommunication of any Catholic supporting the Communists.

Communists vandalized churches and interrupted masses.

The Communist victory in China in 1949 encouraged Ho to intensify his persecution of dissenters. Maoists arrived to instruct the Viet Minh in guerilla warfare, propaganda, reeducation, and rural expropriation ("land reform"). In 1953, with victory in sight in his war against France, Ho finally and fully revealed his true aims and aligned the Viet Minh with China and the Soviet Union. In lands under his control, Catholic missions and monasteries were closed or subjected to ruinous taxes. Catholic schools and charities were shut down, and clergy were publicly humiliated or, if they resisted, executed. Catholics had reason to wonder whether they had any future at all in a "Democratic Republic of Viet Nam."

My father worked for the French as a translator during their prewar occupation of the country. Like every other Vietnamese, however, my father hated the French and joined the movement to keep them from returning to the country after the war. He approved of the Viet Minh before they revealed their communist goals, and in 1948, he even joined the party. Our village of Ngoc Ly, relatively secluded in the province of Nam Tinh, did not receive much outside news. The only major city near us was Hai Duong. For this reason, we had not heard of the evil side of the Viet Minh until it was too late. In 1949, we began to see the murders. I was nine when I saw my first corpse, at the riverbank near our village. I remember going to my favorite fishing spot as I had done all my life. As I approached the riverbank, I saw a body floating on the serene blue waters. The men gathered around the bloated corpse, whispering in hushed voices about the Viet Minh. I did not understand what was going on, but I was scared. Subsequently, the bodies prevented the villagers from eating the fish from the river. That was the last time I went to the river near my home. I left for school in 1952 and

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eventually left my birthplace in 1954. So the Viet Minh took away even my favorite memory, my childhood fishing spot.

In 1950, the Viet Minh abducted my father from our home in the middle of the night. I remember this vividly because the whole hut was shaking with noise. They burst into our home, spoke rapidly and harshly for my father to follow them, and then yelled at the rest of us to stay still. I was ten when this took place. Being the third eldest of seven, I tried to give support to my mother, who was badly shaken by the ordeal. The Communists imprisoned and tortured my father for two years at the Ly Ba So camp of Thanh Hoa. During those years we did not hear a thing. We did not assume that he was dead, because the Viet Minh stated that these men were chosen to be "reeducated." In 1952, my father and the other men from the village were released from the camps and returned to their families. All of them were emaciated and near death from the hideous wounds of past torture. Unfortunately, I did not see my father when he returned. A year later, the Viet Minh again took him away in the middle of the night. Early the next morning they shot my father in the public square. His body was stuffed into a rice bag and thrown into my favorite fishing spot to warn any villagers who did not witness the execution. My mother passed away that same year from depression. — *Nguyen Thanh Quang*

When the French phase of the war came to an end in 1954, Catholics in the North had to decide whether to stay or to flee to the South. The Geneva Accords had created a 304-day grace period for population transfers. From July 21, 1954, to May 21, 1955, North Vietnam's Catholics struggled anew with the Hanoi regime and their own reluctance to leave. It was an excruciating decision, and of the approximately one million who fled, 80 percent were Catholic. They abandoned their property, lives, and above all, the graves of their ancestors. It was an admission of failure; they had tried to prove their Vietnamese patriotism, but the Viet Minh would not let them.

Nor would the Viet Minh let them leave in peace. The roads to freedom were fraught with obstacles. At first, Ho Chi Minh sent mixed messages of reconciliation and terror. In August 1953, he even organized a National Congress of Religions. But the following July he accompanied a promise of toleration with a demand that all Catholics take a political loyalty oath. On Christmas Day in 1954, Ho offered to liberalize his religious laws in return for Catholic obedience to his government. Finally, on June 14, 1955, he issued a "Decree on the Religious Question" that guaranteed freedom of conscience. But by then most Catholics had already spurned his (bloody) extended hand.

The eight hundred thousand Catholics who fled the North left primarily out of fear, though they were also courted by propaganda from the new regime of their fellow Catholic in Saigon, President Ngo Dinh Diem. Diem urged all "chrètiens" to relocate, and the popular slogan in those days was "God has gone South." Washington added its encouragement by sending U.S. planes to drop leaflets that "enticed people to rally to the South."[3] In addition, the French and Americans lured refugees southward by offering them relief aid.

[3] Ibid., p. 22.

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But this propaganda was only marginally successful. After all, half the Catholic community *remained* in the North, vowing and hoping to stay out of politics. Secondly, the various leaflets never reached the smaller or more remote towns and villages, or they were confiscated by the Viet Minh. Lastly, no amount of money could compensate a Vietnamese for the loss of his ancestral soil. Therefore, the main reason Catholics fled was fear of persecution. And the scale of the exodus surprised everyone, not least Ho Chi Minh. He had thought that the Geneva promise of a grace period was a relatively minor concession; so, from July to mid-September 1954, he left the roads to the South relatively clear of obstructions. Even the French authorities, who initially handled the evacuation, had expected no more than thirty thousand refugees for the whole 300-plus days. But by August 1954, over seventy thousand people had sought assistance.[4] At that point, the French and South Vietnamese threw up their hands and turned for help to the United States, which promptly dispatched the Seventh Fleet.

Sabotaging the Road to Freedom

The number of people "voting with their feet" became a propaganda disaster for the Viet Minh. To counter its effect, "they tried to show that this decision was not taken by the people themselves."[5] Rumors were spread that the United States had threatened to bomb the North with atomic weapons after the grace period.[6] Then, to slow the exodus, the Viet Minh undertook to sabotage the promise of free emigration. Soldiers fired on refugees and in some cases killed hundreds by sinking their boats and rafts. The Communists imposed restrictions on the use of all manner of transport, even carts and bicycles, and put up roadblocks on the routes heading south. Near the end of the grace period, the Viet Minh took to scattering families, knowing that people would not leave their family members behind. Some people were kidnapped until their exit permits expired, leaving them no choice but to go home to their villages.

Other Viet Minh obstructions included the use of soldiers to intimidate travellers and the arrest of priests, who often led their flocks in emigration. At Ba Lang, ten thousand Catholics were imprisoned in a church, their families scattered, and their priest arrested. At Luu My in December 1954, three thousand Catholics requested free passage south, whereupon Viet Minh cadres fought their way into the village, killing twelve people and imprisoning two hundred. At Phu Yen, all the young men were arrested, then tortured with chains or starved. Viet Minh also descended on fishing villages to confiscate the sails and

[4] Donald Lancaster, *The Emancipation of French Indochina* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 343.

[5] Haas, *Viet Nam*, p. 23.

[6] Ibid.

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masts of all boats. By the last days of the exodus, all that was left in the great harbor of Hai Phong were some bamboo rafts and wooden planks.

I was a child when my family attempted to make a run for the South. Although I was quite young, I remember the experience vividly because of the constant fear and urgency I felt. We left in August of 1954. Our neighbors and friends had begun to prepare for their journeys, and some actually left before we did. My family, however, was scattered all over the northern region of Viet Nam. I had one brother who attended school alone in the city. We did not know when he had left, or if he had left at all. When we finally made our decision to depart, we planned to do so in the daytime. Our first attempt failed. Viet Minh soldiers stopped us abruptly and refused to let us out of our own village. We had heard that the governments on both sides allowed for free and safe passage, but we also had heard that the Viet Minh were being uncooperative. My family is Catholic, and we bear witness to the many traitorous and sinister lies of the Communists. Failing in our first attempt, we decided to change our strategy. We could no longer bring as many provisions and cherished heirlooms as originally planned. Instead, we carried only rice, water, and dried fruits. We left at night under the cover of darkness. Hai Duong, the closest city, was a day's walk on a bright, sunny day. For us, the journey took three nights. We slept and hid during the day. I left with my sister-in-law, uncle, and great aunt, while the rest of my family trailed a night behind. I remember at night being mortally afraid of every noise. My uncle imbued me with a sense of fear and dread so that I wouldn't make a fuss or perceive the ordeal as a game. I remember having fitful dreams during the day of being chased down and forced to return to the village. I would not allow death to enter my mind. Finally, we made it to Hai Duong. From there the trip was simple and thankfully free of obstructions. We boarded a train to Hai Phong harbor and there hopped onto a landing craft that took us to an American ship. Our first entry into the South was through the harbor at Vung Tau, south of Sai Gon. We were then relocated to Rach Bop village in the Thu Dau Mot district of Binh Duong Province.

I remember my sister-in-law crying when we reached "freedom," not for joy but in anguish. She beat her breast several times (a ritual we do during Catholic mass) for the pain she felt in leaving the land where she was born. She feebly tried to swim out towards the horizon in a last, futile attempt to reclaim her land and her dignity. — *Nguyen Khac Chinh*

Preferential Treatment

The "second chance" offered to the Catholics arose instantaneously in South Viet Nam with the rise of Ngo Dinh Diem. Under the Diem regime, North Vietnamese Catholic refugees provided much-needed popular support for the new leader. But the interdependence of the new leader and the new citizens bred a climate of resentment and jealousy in the volatile state of South Viet Nam. Through the Diem regime's practice of religious preference in the relocation process, allocation of government funds, and promulgation of new

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laws, Catholics and Buddhists were pitted against one another. Unfortunately, the rivalry consumed the nation at a time when cohesion was necessary for survival.

For many South Vietnamese citizens, the growing tension was not apparent until 1963. It is important to note that many average Saigonese and other urbanites were unaware of any preferential treatment or simply regarded the religious antagonism as an expression of *political* rivalry. In other words, some citizens thought the opposition to Diem adopted a Buddhist vanguard as a smoke screen to veil their true political intentions, and that the corruption in the Diem regime was the work only of greedy individuals and not a large religious network.

For many reasons, Catholics received a majority of the aid allocated for North Vietnamese refugees. First, most of the relief funds were donated by Roman Catholic churches from all around the world.[7] The second reason derived from the support Ngo Dinh Diem received from a South Vietnamese Catholic church suddenly strengthened by the influx of seven hundred thousand patrons over the three hundred days.[8] The Catholic community doubled in size and strength. Thirdly, a new dimension was added to the age-old animosity between the North Vietnamese (*bac ky*) and South Vietnamese (*nam ky*). The South, pampered by the easy climate and the riches of French colonialism, never experienced the hardships of the North. The northerners, on the other hand, were predominantly frugal and hardworking, shaped by their experiences with the Viet Minh and the harsh climate. Therefore, the influx of hard-headed, arrogant North Vietnamese Catholics threatened the very livelihood of the South Vietnamese Buddhists.

The Buddhist-Catholic rivalry consumed the nation.

Diem's relocation program received mixed reviews. Urbanites, both Catholic and Buddhist, applauded his ability to absorb nearly one million new citizens. In the countryside, however, Diem's policies were less revered. Destitute southern farmers and refugee Buddhists recognized the preferential treatment afforded to Catholics. According to them, Diem selectively placed his Catholics in more fertile, safer areas nearer to the coast, away from the tentacles of the Communists.[9]

The numerous manifestations of special treatment given to the Catholic community included governmental aid, labor exemptions, political favors, and preferential laws. For example, three hundred thousand acres of "Church lands" were not surveyed under the Diem regime and therefore not taxed.[10] Catholic communities received most of the aid dispensed under the agricultural credit system to build schools and hospitals, and South Vietnamese soldiers were put to work constructing and repairing Catholic properties.[11]

[7] Lancaster, *The Emancipation of French Indochina*, p. 345.
[8] Gheddo, *The Cross and the Bo-Tree*, p. 136.
[9] Lancaster, *The Emancipation of French Indochina*, p. 346.
[10] Haas, *Viet Nam*, p. 27.
[11] Robert Shaplen, *The Lost Revolution* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1976), p. 92.

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Government funds and endorsements for church functions flowed freely from 1955 to 1963. Bishops consistently received top priority in public functions and in general reaped countless favors under the Diem regime. Direct appropriations to Catholic services included funding for visits by high-ranking religious figures to South Viet Nam. For example, when Cardinal Gregorio Agagianian came to Viet Nam, his stay was completely organized by the supposedly secular Sai Gon regime.[12]

Under Diem, Catholic functions often resembled nationwide festivities. Church processions would block city streets for hours with no penalty. Pilgrimages to major shrines would receive overt support and exaggerated exposure by the government. Two pilgrimages to Marian shrines in 1959 (Sai Gon) and 1961 (La Vang, near Hue) attracted huge crowds. Such events were portrayed as national festivals even though the Catholic community constituted only 10 percent of the population.

The benefits of being Catholic quickly outweighed the drawbacks usually suffered by religious minorities, as alienation and marginalization were transformed into privilege. The Buddhists, forced to attend Catholic functions and inundated with Catholic Mass via media coverage, reacted in one of two ways: conversion or active resistance.

Buddhist Backlash

The wrath of South Vietnamese Buddhists destroyed the Diem regime. The decade between the Geneva Accords and the start of the era of "revolving-door presidents" was one of rising tension between Buddhists and Catholics, exacerbated by the quasi-monarchical pretensions of Ngo Dinh Diem's family. The Ngo clan consisted of Diem, his brother Nhu, and his sister-in-law Madame Nhu. Two other brothers were given leadership positions at Hue (middle region) and Can Tho (southern region). Nhu and his wife were stationed with Diem in the heart of South Viet Nam, Sai Gon. Unfortunately, the couple epitomized intolerance. Nhu adopted a philosophy known as *Nhan Vi* (personalism), a mixture of Christian philosophy and Confucianist traditions. In doing so, Nhu formed his own Personalist Labor Party to combat communism. In reality, though, the militant youths in the party resembled a belligerent "secret police."[13] Madame Nhu, his wife, was especially resented for her "aristocratic" demeanor. Her rude and insincere remarks on the political climate of South Viet Nam in the early 1960s were infamous. The combination of an autocratic state and angry citizens set the tone for the 1963 uprising.

The Hue revolt sparked the first flickers of animosity in South Viet Nam during the early 1960s. May 8, 1963, marked the 2,507th anniversary of Buddha's

[12] Haas, *Viet Nam*, p. 27. Cardinal Agagianian (1895–1971) was Proprefect of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith from 1958 to 1960 and Prefect of that body from 1960 to 1970.

[13] Ibid., p. 26.

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death. The ancient imperial city of Hue, with its large Buddhist population, began to prepare for a massive commemoration and celebration of the holiday. Consequently, on May 6, a government ordinance restated the 1957 law prohibiting the display of religious banners in major city streets. In 1963, many South Vietnamese citizens did not hear of the ordinance, nor were they aware of the existing law.[14] Moreover, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the consecration of Archbishop Thuc of Hue overlapped with the Buddhist celebration. On May 4, Catholics carried religious paraphernalia and banners in the city streets, and flew the Catholic flag over Hue. Therefore, the next day, the Buddhists began to display their flags for the upcoming celebration. Since the government did not take immediate action, Buddhists held a preplanned meeting on May 8 at the Hue radio station against the religious persecution by the state.[15]

Explosive events followed the Buddhist mass meeting. Hue's police employed firehoses, tear gas, and blank shells to disperse the crowd. When those measures failed, Major Dang Sy, a Catholic deputy province chief, ordered his troops to use grenades and live ammunition on the Buddhists, nine of whom were killed. The South Vietnamese government blamed the affair on Communists.[16]

The Hue revolt quickly set off a blaze of political protest in the South. Buddhist leaders convened and adopted drastic measures against the Catholic tyranny of South Viet Nam. Five weeks later, Diem attempted to defuse the crisis with a joint Buddhist-Catholic communiqué—but he refused to take responsibility for the Hue massacre. On June 11, 1963, Buddhist monk Thich Quang Duc set himself on fire. The horrifying self-immolation attracted international media coverage. In August, three bonzes and one abbot burned themselves in the public squares of Sai Gon. The capital was said to be "a city on fire."

Sai Gon was a "city on fire."

Meanwhile, the Ngo clan itself cracked under the pressure. Nhu ordered his Republican Youth Organization (a quasi-political group of militant thugs) to "protest" the government's signing of the communiqué with the Buddhists. Nhu condemned Diem's "weakness" and threatened a political coup to oust his brother if more aggressive tactics were not taken against the troublemakers. Nhu's theory rested on the belief that the Buddhist leaders were working secretly with the Communist leaders of Ha Noi. Simultaneously, Madame Nhu committed political suicide by describing the Buddhist immolations as "bonze barbecues."

Reacting to the Buddhists' "One Thousand Declarations" against the regime, issued on August 18, 1963, at the Xa Loi pagoda, Diem declared martial law. Six more bonzes burned themselves, and a "mini-war" broke out between the government and its citizens. Nhu's secret police raided pagodas, and Colonel Tung of Sai Gon attacked Xa Loi and three other Buddhist temples with bombs and grenades. Hoping to deceive the protesting American government and

[14] Gheddo, *The Cross and the Bo-Tree*, p. 179.
[15] Shaplen, *The Lost Revolution*, p. 193.
[16] Ibid., p. 194.

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place the blame for the raids on the army, Nhu predated a decree purporting to end martial law and manipulated leading military officials into accepting full responsibility for the raids. Initially, U.S. media coverage of the event did indeed blame the army for the attacks against Buddhists. But massive student demonstrations blaming the Saigon regime for the pagoda raids defeated Nhu's strategy. Military morale tumbled, and the army turned against Nhu when he ordered the arrest of several thousand students. The soldiers had brothers and sisters in the demonstrations and were unwilling to throw their siblings in jail.[17] In the coup that followed on November 1, 1963, General Doung Van "Big" Minh shot Diem and Nhu in a cable car as they departed the Cho Lon district of Sai Gon.[18]

The fall of the Diem regime set the stage for the bigger war against the North that ensued in 1965. Since Catholics and Buddhists were unable to resolve their past grievances, the united front needed to fight the Communists never emerged. Ngo Dinh Diem, the only leader capable of maintaining any semblance of a state, also lit the flame that consumed the nation. For the Catholics, Diem's demise represented a lost "beacon of hope" and a second failure in their quest for national acceptance.

It is important to note that many apolitical citizens of Viet Nam perceived the events of the Diem decade as mundane and typical. The omniscient specter of death, student demonstrations, and political movements had plagued Viet Nam for hundreds of years. Unfortunately, the fire that consumed the nation after 1963 devoured even the ignorant.

At 7 a.m. on April 29, 1975, Chu Niem and I made a dash for the Tan Son Nhut airport. Chu Niem was a pilot in the South Vietnamese Army, so we assumed that he would be allowed to gain access to a helicopter. Unfortunately, we were denied. The days spent in planning this escape were all for naught. At this point, a 24-hour curfew was imposed. We ignored it (as did everyone else) and went about finding an escape route. Finally, we agreed that Chu Niem would pick up me and my family at the roof of the Vu Quy church at 12:30 p.m. We arrived at the church around 10 a.m. We received word that Chu Niem was able to procure a helicopter. But four hours elapsed and there was no sign of him or the helicopter. We were stranded. Along the way, my mother-in-law, a woman of 65, broke her ankle while running. My eldest son, Hung, was given the task of carrying her. Together we totaled fifteen. I personally had nine children, the youngest a baby of five months. Finally, around 2 p.m., my younger brother telephoned us. He had been attending a school that allowed him access to a boat. We were to run immediately to the Sai Gon port and look for a boat named Long Ho. *We had to be quick because many families were known to jump aboard strangers' boats and demand passage. When we arrived, the boat was almost filled to its capacity. Normally, the oil boat held fifteen to twenty people. Today it carried a hundred!*

[17] Ibid., p. 196.

[18] George Donalson Moss, *Vietnam: An American Ordeal* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1994), p. 45.

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We reached Vung Tau at around 6 p.m. There we boarded a charland *(floating deck). At this point, a mad scramble took place for the remaining space. Sandbags and U.S. ammunition were dumped into the ocean. Unfortunately, many people went overboard with the materials and drowned.*

On May 5, we were picked up by an American ship. Surprisingly, we were on board with Nguyen Cao Ky and other high-ranking generals. The journey was extremely uncomfortable and crowded. Many people vomited from the stench of human beings and seasickness. We slept standing up for the whole ride to America. This time, the loss of our homeland seemed more permanent. In 1945, there was hope; in 1975, only defeat and utter sadness. Our mystical land was cut off from us forever. Ironically, the people responsible for our exodus were not barbarians but our own countrymen, our own brothers and sisters.

— Nguyen Thanh Quang

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No Discharge from That War

Aftermyths of the Antiwar Movement

by Adam Garfinkle

Despite the bow that nearly everyone makes to the need for historical perspective, contending interpretations of the Vietnam War and the antiwar movement that began to emerge even before the war ended still define the debate today. The hawks' version holds that the war was both nobly motivated and winnable, but that antiwar hippies, the press, and micro-managing civilian game-theorists in the Pentagon lost it. Had military professionals been given free rein, the hawks contend, they would have been able to prevail in the field before an antiwar movement spread sufficiently to complicate politics on the home front. The doves' version, by contrast, holds that the war was unwise (and possibly immoral) and unwinnable no matter what strategy was employed. Inasmuch as the United States was attempting to suppress a genuine nationalist peasant uprising in what amounted to a civil war, the antiwar movement, in this view, reflected a higher patriotism and, by forcing de-escalation, spared American and Asian lives. In light of the available data, examined from a quarter century's perspective, both hawks and doves are wrong on virtually all their main contentions.

Hawks' Misconceptions

The Vietnam War was likely winnable within a reasonable definition of victory, but the military strategy adopted by the United States in late 1964, and doggedly pursued until 1968, was counterproductive to America's own war aims. Hawks are wrong to blame the antiwar movement or the press for losing the war. Civilian and especially military leaders at high levels of the U.S. government lost the war. Their failure in battle is what gradually stoked antiwar sentiments at home, not the other way around.

Likewise, hawks misconceive the nature of the antiwar movement if they depict it as a subversive force seemingly led by students but in fact

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manipulated by communists through various popular fronts.[1] The antiwar movement was never communist in any meaningful sense. To be sure, professional radical activists led the movement, while students constituted its mass and target. But only a minority of the professionals were communists, and these were divided among Trotskyites, Stalinists, Maoists, and varieties of "independents." The New Left, moreover, which played an erratic but powerful role in the antiwar movement as it evolved, displayed an indigenous streak of American anarchism from start to finish despite eventually developing an authoritarian Marxist spirit. The sheer disparate quality of the antiwar movement's radical core helps to explain its fragmentation and self-destruction after 1968. No mere Soviet front could have been so interesting, or so organizationally inept.

Hawks also contend that the Vietnam War and the draft were the underlying reasons for student radicalism and the counterculture of the sixties. They claim the "movement" presented no principled or well-thought-out critique of American society, and its "moral" stance was merely an excuse for adolescent indulgence: sex, drugs, and stop-the-war. The hawks, once again, have it wrong. Student radicals were not all spoiled brats, or cowards, or psychological aberrants who hated their parents. The alienation and anxiety felt by the baby boom generation were real, products of moral confusion and disillusionment born of postwar materialism, racial prejudice, and the passionless juggernaut of cold war technocracy. To be sure, the war in Vietnam (and the crisis over segregation) were central to the radicalism of sixties youth, but as catalysts, not causes. The real cause was the yawning vacuum of meaning at the core of an otherwise booming postwar society—which is why the counterculture displayed so many characteristics of, for want of a better term, a "religious" movement among youth. Restless and affluent, spared the struggles of their parents and grandparents against economic depression and fascism, and raised on cold war pieties about "truth, justice, and the American way," the baby boomers were told by their elders to be idealistic at the very time when all that once was "sacred"—traditional religion—had been virtually banished from everyday life. So their chiliastic search turned to politics, where the godhead has often been sought in modern times. The antiwar movement, in short, was a sort of modern children's crusade, and it had similarly depressing consequences.

Doves' Fallacies

Of all the conclusions drawn by hawks and doves, the only one shared by both camps is that the antiwar movement succeeded in limiting and ultimately

[1] A thesis of extreme manipulation is put forward in William F. Gausman, *Red Stains on Vietnam Doves* (Denver, Colo.: Veracity, 1989); a less extreme thesis of manipulation, focusing on the role of the press, is advanced by Arnaud de Borchgrave, "The Role of the Media in the Vietnam War," in *The Vietnam Debate*, ed. John Norton (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1990).

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stopping U.S. military activity in Southeast Asia. Tom Hayden, perhaps the archetypal antiwar radical, claimed in 1977: "We ended a war, toppled two Presidents, and desegregated the South."[2] Joshua Muravchik wrote in 1989 that one positive achievement of the New Left was "the withdrawal of the United States from Indochina."[3] Irwin Unger claimed that the antiwar movement "forced the United States out of Vietnam."[4] Jerry Rubin put it this way: "Our nationwide campaign to build public opposition to the Vietnam War succeeded, and the war ended."[5] David Horowitz wrote that the radical Left of the sixties "began as a fringe movement" but:

> Our ranks continued to swell until finally we reached what can only be called the conscience of the nation. . . . Because the American people became so troubled, the American government lost its will to continue the war, and withdrew. . . . We changed national policy in the most dramatic way on the most important issue: the issue of war and peace. . . . In all the history of war, there was no other case of a power so great retreating from the field of battle because of the moral protest of its people.[6]

Especially striking, many committed observers concur with this view of the antiwar movement's success while simultaneously acknowledging that the movement "turned off" a lot of people—a reaction that professional analysts of opinion refer to as a negative-follower effect.[7] "In dividing the Democratic party between 'hawks' and 'doves,'" wrote George McGovern of the radical side of the antiwar movement,

> it probably contributed decisively to the election of Richard Nixon in 1968 and his reelection in 1972. In 1968 Democratic doves tended to sit on their hands after the defeat of Senator McCarthy and the assassination of Senator Robert Kennedy.[8]

Then, immediately after admitting that the antiwar movement helped to elect Richard Nixon twice, McGovern was still able to write:

> My biased conviction is that the antiwar movement finally saved America from a moral, political and economic disaster. It is said by supporters of the Vietnam War that the war was not lost in Vietnam but in the antiwar movement of America. *I hope that is a correct analysis.* It would be the highest tribute both to the antiwar movement and to American democracy if it could be firmly established that organized public opinion and political actions were responsible for correcting the enormous blunders of the leaders who took us unto the jungles of Vietnam.[9]

[2] Tom Hayden quoted in "An Elegy for the New Left," *Time*, Aug. 15, 1977.

[3] Joshua Muravchik, "Mississippi Burning: Airbrushing History," *The World and I*, Mar. 1989, p. 178.

[4] Irwin Unger, *The Movement: A History of the American New Left, 1959–1972* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1974), p. 207.

[5] Quoted in the obituary of Jerry Rubin, *New York Times*, Nov. 30, 1994.

[6] David J. Horowitz, "The Antiwar Movement: Vietnam Lessons," in *The Vietnam Debate: A Fresh Look at the Arguments*, ed. John Norton Moore (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1990), pp. 303–4.

[7] John Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), p. 62.

[8] George McGovern, foreword to *Give Peace a Chance*, ed. Melvin Small and William D. Hoover (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1992), pp. xi–xii.

[9] Ibid., p. xii. Emphasis added.

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McGovern is not the only one to refer to the negative-follower effect in one breath and discount its impact in the next. The former radical protestor David Farber wrote of the most violent members of the movement: "Though few in number, such zealots gave antiwar protests a negative image and provided ammunition to administration supporters struggling to discredit the movement as anti-American."[10] Todd Gitlin, a former member of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), likewise admitted that, to the shock of the protestors present, most Americans sided with the police in Chicago in 1968. He understood in retrospect how wrong antiwar radicals had been to imagine the riots in Chicago as a victory:

> To our innocent eyes, it defied common sense that people could watch even the sliver of the onslaught that got onto television and side with the cops—which in fact was precisely what the polls showed. As unpopular as the war had become, the antiwar movement was detested still more—the most hated political group in America, *disliked even by most of the people who supported immediate withdrawal from Vietnam*. . . . Whoever swung the clubs, we were to blame.[11]

But do Farber or Gitlin conclude overall that the long phase of the antiwar movement in which radicals were ascendent was counterproductive to stopping the war? On the contrary, it does not seem to have occurred to them.

Nor, apparently, has the idea occurred to sympathetic academics eager to embrace the same contradiction. Melvin Small and William D. Hoover, for example, noted the diversity of the antiwar movement coalition:

> The practical, no-enemies-to-the-Left approach, which guaranteed huge turnouts at periodic rallies and marches, nevertheless contributed to bitter factional disputes and drew the media's attention to the most extreme and bizarre protestors.

That is correct. But the authors continue as if they had not absorbed their own sentence:

> Yet one wonders what other approach could have produced *the relatively successful record* of the Vietnam antiwar movement.[12]

Without notable exception, aging sixties radicals and their contemporary sympathizers resist the general conclusion that the overall impact of radical protest was negative, although they can recite from their own experiences specific observations of the negative-follower effect. The truth is that the radical antiwar movement made even the Johnson and Nixon administrations look good, and it helped them maintain requisite public support for the war despite their own failures to prosecute it properly and effectively.

[10] David Farber, "The Counterculture and the Antiwar Movement," in *Give Peace a Chance*, ed. Small and Hoover, p. 19.

[11] Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam, 1987), p. 335.

[12] Melvin Small and William D. Hoover, introduction to *Give Peace a Chance*, ed. Small and Hoover, pp. 4–5. Emphasis added.

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How is it possible for the same individual to acknowledge the antiwar movement's strong negative-follower effect and still insist that the movement limited or halted U.S. military activity in Vietnam by turning opinion against the war? Who can explain how one gets a "middle" American to oppose the war by telling him—as the radical antiwar movement did—that his life is empty, his values are criminal, and everything he cherishes is the scourge of mankind?

Phases

One reason that doves and hawks alike oversimplify and misconstrue the nature and effect of the antiwar movement is that both it and U.S. strategy in the war were in constant flux, and after twenty-five years it is easy to mis-remember how its phases joined together.

The war and antiwar movement moved together through three analytically distinct phases. In the first phase, before 1966, opposition to the expanding U.S. role in Vietnam was predominantly liberal and well-represented inside both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. It was effective, too: the escalation of the war in 1965 might have taken place in 1962 or 1963 but for opposing sentiment within the government and opinion elite. The rationale for escalation in those years differed only in degree, not in kind, from the rationale that eventually propelled American action in 1965.

In the second phase, between early 1966 and 1968–69, the antiwar movement's leadership grew increasingly radical, hence counterproductive to stopping U.S. military activity in Southeast Asia. At the very time when the war's unpopularity was growing in the country at large, the image of irresponsibility and antipatriotism conveyed by the antiwar movement muted what might otherwise have been a louder expression of disaffection on the part of both elite and public opinion. The antiwar movement's impact in this phase was doubly hurtful because U.S. military activity in Southeast Asia was itself unwittingly counterproductive to American war aims. The antiwar movement's inadvertent role in bolstering the Johnson administration's own stasis thus not only helped to prolong the war, but also contributed, marginally at least, to losing it.

In the third phase, from 1969 to the fall of Saigon in 1975, the re-domesticated antiwar movement, now respectably lodged in the political arena, was again moderately effective in limiting U.S. military activity in Southeast Asia, mainly through actions taken by Congress to constrain the Nixon administration. But the movement's return to the mainstream, hence its renewed efficiency, was mainly a function of normal politics and electoral dynamics. Particularly important in this regard was that Democrats, having lost the White House, could decry Vietnam as Nixon's war rather than Johnson's.

But this phase of the antiwar movement was injurious, too, because by then the war had entered a "conventional" post-insurgency phase for which U.S. military capabilities were much better suited. Had the political situation at home permitted, the U.S. military might well have performed the task of

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protecting the Saigon regime indefinitely, and the upshot might have been a tolerable stalemate of the sort that emerged in Korea following the 1953 armistice.

Looking at the broader picture, then, it is clear that the normal contours of American politics, combined with the battlefield situation, drove public opinion and determined American decisions about escalation and de-escalation more than anything the antiwar movement ever did in the streets. Those, like Tom Wells most recently, who continue to argue that the antiwar movement "played a major role in restricting, de-escalating and ending the war" are just wrong.[13]

The Data

Claims of the sort made by Hayden, Horowitz, Farber, and the others about the efficacy of the antiwar movement sound correct partly because we are so used to hearing them. But in fact, radical protest created an immense backlash against the antiwar movement and deterred many Americans from opposing the war sooner because of the company they would have to keep in so doing.[14] Poll data support an interpretation to the effect that the antiwar movement was at best sterile, at worst self-defeating, in shaping public opinion as a whole.[15] They suggest that the war would have been *more* unpopular sooner, among a broader and more politically salient segment of the American people, had radical-led protests not occurred. The politically salient included, perhaps most critically, the rank-and-file Democratic voter. As Kenneth Heineman put it: "By alienating working- and lower-middle-class white Democrats, campus activists discredited the causes of peace and civil rights within that important political constituency."[16]

As a result, the radicalization of the antiwar movement after early 1966 most likely strengthened the prevailing "middle" view that the United States should neither pull out nor sharply escalate the fighting, but should maintain troops in Vietnam while trying to negotiate an end to the war that would leave South Vietnam free of imposed communist domination.[17] Since that was, in

[13] Tom Wells, *The War Within: America's Battle Over Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 4.

[14] See John P. Robinson, "Balance Theory and Vietnam-Related Attitudes," *Social Science Quarterly,* Dec. 1970, pp. 610–16.

[15] See John P. Robinson, "Public Reaction to Political Protest, Chicago 1968," *Public Opinion Quarterly,* Spring 1970, pp. 1–9; E.M. Schreiber, "Antiwar Demonstrations and American Public Opinion on the War in Vietnam," *British Journal of Sociology,* June 1976, pp. 225–32; Sidney Verba and Richard Brody, "Participation, Policy Preferences, and the War in Vietnam," *Public Opinion Quarterly,* Fall 1970, pp. 325–32; William R. Berkowitz, "The Impact of Anti–Vietnam War Demonstrations upon National Public Opinion and Military Indicators," *Social Science Research,* Mar. 1973, pp. 1–14; and, especially, Mueller, *War, Presidents and Public Opinion.*

[16] Kenneth Heineman, "The Silent Majority Speaks: Antiwar Protest and Backlash, 1965–1972," *Peace and Change,* Oct. 1992, p. 426.

[17] Robinson, "Public Reaction to Political Protest," pp. 1–9.

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effect, the Johnson administration's own attitude, public opinion seems not to have limited the Johnson administration beyond the limits it imposed on itself.[18] If anything, the tenor of public opinion is most logically read as having reinforced administration stasis.

Public unease about the war in general must be distinguished from antiwar activism, and there is no evidence that the former was generated by the latter. Contrary to received opinion about the lock-step relationship among the war's dragging on, the rise of radical protest, and Lyndon Johnson's unpopularity, the data suggest more subtle relationships. John E. Mueller has shown that there was a decline in the rate at which opposition to the war increased (after the initial phase of Americanization in 1965) despite a growing casualty rate. President Johnson's unpopularity was not a direct consequence of the war, at least not before March 1968. Public opinion was not especially sensitive to major events, and antiwar sentiment was not much more widespread, even among young people, during the Vietnam War than it was during the war in Korea. It was only more vocal.[19]

Radical protest created an immense backlash against the antiwar movement.

Moreover, no single, straightforward hypothesis explains support and opposition for the war. It cannot be demonstrated that support declined simply because the war dragged on and casualties mounted.[20] That is partly because there seems to have been a "sunken-cost" source of support for the war, which is basically the notion that disengagement short of victory was more sharply rejected because so much had been committed to victory. But setting aside such difficulties in interpreting the data's finer points, one can say that, of the roughly two dozen academic specialists who have examined the relevant opinion data over the last two decades, none has concluded that antiwar protest was an important factor in molding public opinion against the war—not one.

So what did shape public opinion? A combination of party loyalties and partisanship; patriotism expressed largely through support for the president; sensitivity to the war's costs weighed against potential benefits; and, perhaps most important of all, shifts in administration policies. Support for the war fell sharply after the Americanization of the effort in 1965, then stabilized for a time. But by the second half of 1967, support for the administration's policy declined again and never recovered. A January 1966 Gallup poll of the president's approval rating over Vietnam showed 56 percent approval, 26 percent disapproval, and 18 percent with no opinion. But by August 1967, only 39 percent approved, 47 percent disapproved, and 14 percent had no opinion.[21]

Within this general opinion trend, some interesting relationships emerge. First, not all lack of support for the prevailing war policy was dovish. Substantial

[18] See Schreiber, "Antiwar Demonstrations and American Public Opinion on the War in Vietnam."
[19] Mueller, *War, Presidents and Public Opinion*, chap. 1.
[20] Ibid., p. 59.
[21] Ibid., p. 104.

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support existed for escalatory options to resolve the stalemate. In January 1966, for example, a Gallup poll asked: "If you could sit down and talk to President Johnson and ask him any question you wanted about Vietnam, what would you ask him?" The results favored the ignorant and the hawks as answers fell largely into two categories: "Why are we fighting in Vietnam?" and "Why don't we step up our effort in Vietnam?" A September 1966 poll reinforced this finding. Asked "What should the U.S. do in Vietnam?" fully 55 percent answered "increase the strength of attack." Equal numbers (about 18 percent) answered that we should "maintain current policy" and that we should "begin to withdraw." Seventeen percent had no opinion.[22]

In other words, Americans were ambivalent. On the one hand, they wanted either to win or to leave. On the other hand, they were loath to turn against their president or country in time of war. The people were in the same quandary as the administration and its generals, who were faced with excruciating choices and debilitating moral dilemmas.[23]

An April 1966 Gallup poll summed up the matter. The question was: "What are your overall feelings about the Vietnam situation?" The data broke down like this:[24]

"It's a necessary evil"	43
"U.S. should get out"	15
"We should be more aggressive"	12
General fear of war	11
"Wish for a quick ending"	10
Too many lives being lost	5
Other reasons	6
Don't know	6

It is important to note that those who favored unilateral U.S. withdrawal (before the January 1968 Tet Offensive) never exceeded 24 percent.

The same ambivalence appears in a June 1966 Gallup poll that asked the most famous of all Vietnam-era questions: "Did the United States make a mistake by entering Vietnam?" Fully 49 percent said no, while 36 percent said yes. But of those 36 percent, considerably less than half favored unilateral withdrawal. In September, Gallup asked if sending troops to Vietnam had been an error. The results were almost identical: 49 percent said no, 35 percent said yes, 16 percent had no opinion. On February 26, 1967, Gallup asked if the bombing of North Vietnam should be halted—one of the central demands of the antiwar movement at the time. Fully 67 percent said no; only 24 percent said yes. Those views were not dissimilar from the views of the individuals then busy writing the memos that eventually became the *Pentagon Papers*.

[22] Totals exceed 100 percent because some respondents gave more than one answer.

[23] See William J. Duiker, *U.S. Containment Policy and the Conflict in Indochina* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 362–63.

[24] Again, figures exceed 100 percent because some respondents gave more than one answer.

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While policymakers and the attentive public were cognizant of antecedent error and future danger, they were convinced that, with considerable costs already incurred, the United States could only go forward. This ambivalence was neither irrational nor surprising given the choices available as the war wore on.

Perhaps most striking of all, opinion data after 1966 show a sharp swing toward opposing the war effort only *after* the shock of Tet had sunk in, and especially after President Johnson's famous March 31, 1968, speech.[25] They show another drop in support for the war after the Nixon administration, in 1970, placed itself squarely on the rhetorical path of winding down the war. What this suggests is that during the Vietnam War, most Americans took their cue from the president. Before President Johnson himself changed course, an outright majority of Americans opposed unilateral withdrawal.[26] The same was true in Congress; indeed, as Dean Rusk pointed out, before March 1968 the administration's main opposition in Congress came from those who wanted to escalate the war, not from those who wanted to withdraw.[27] Public opinion as a whole remained opposed to unilateral withdrawal even in 1970, though the percentage of those who favored unilateral withdrawal had nearly doubled in the two years since Tet.[28]

But for the antiwar movement, LBJ's reversal might have come earlier.

So much, then, for the claims that the antiwar movement ultimately reached the conscience of America and turned public opinion against the war. The data show clearly that it did no such thing.

Most likely, the majority of Americans interpreted antiwar radicalism within the framework of their fundamental views of the war. Hawks concluded that escalation in Vietnam must be the best option, in part because the counterculture opposed it, thereby undermining American resolve, cheering Hanoi, and exposing youth to the blandishments of communists. Those already dovish by inclination could bolster their preference for withdrawal on the grounds that massive dissent was tearing the nation apart. Most important, the majority of adult Americans, who were partisans and "followers" of political parties, interpreted antiwar agitation within the framework of their loyalties; with the antiwar movement vociferously against Presidents Johnson and Nixon and both mainstream parties, these interpretations must have been generally negative.

So it was in the great middle of American opinion, among the ambivalent many, that the radical antiwar movement may have had its greatest impact. As

[25] In that speech, Johnson announced (1) that he was not a candidate for reelection, (2) that he would institute a limited bombing halt, and (3) that he would negotiate with Hanoi without preconditions.

[26] Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in the Government," *American Political Science Review,* Sept. 1974, p. 958. This data confirms the importance of "followers," those who take their cue from the president.

[27] Dean Rusk, *As I Saw It* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), p. 500.

[28] Milton J. Rosenberg, Sidney Verba, and Philip Converse, *Vietnam and the Silent Majority; The Dove's Guide* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1970).

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the war dragged on, middle opinion did indeed drift from ambivalently hawkish to ambivalently dovish. But again, antiwar radicalism, if it did anything, retarded that shift. As Mueller put it:

> For a war . . . public opinion is going to be influenced by who is for it and who is against it. Now it happens that the opposition to the war in Vietnam came to be associated with rioting, disruption, and bomb throwing, and war protestors, as a group, enjoyed negative popularity ratings to an almost unparalleled degree. . . . That negative reference groups can harm a cause's impact . . . is quite clear.[29]

In short, to be associated with a general revolt against authority, with irreverence and illegality, did not appeal to middle America, whatever its own doubts about Vietnam. In a mid-1970 Gallup poll, SDS was named as a "highly unfavorable" group by 42 percent, a higher negative rating than even the John Birch Society received. The Black Panthers' "highly unfavorable" rating was 75 percent—about the same as that of the Ku Klux Klan.[30] A University of Michigan study in 1968 asked respondents to place personalities and groups on a 100-point scale. Antiwar protestors received a zero from a third of all respondents, and only 16 percent put them anywhere in the upper half.[31]

By the 1968 election, the counterproductivity of the radical antiwar movement was clear to most professional politicians in both major parties, and those seeking to topple the Democrats set out very deliberately to harness the ambient anger. There is no doubt that the backlash against the hippies and flag-burners contributed to Nixon's narrow victory, not to speak of what it did for the national political career of Alabama governor George Wallace.[32]

As suggested above, the most counterproductive aspect of the radical antiwar movement may have been within the Democratic Party, the party of labor and the working class, and it probably occurred before the 1968 election. Latent dovish sentiment was stronger among Democrats than Republicans, but Democratic partisans were not wont to betray their party leadership and their president, even though the impulse to do so grew as time passed. Had it not been for the radicalization of the antiwar movement, chances are that what happened inside the party in 1968 would have happened earlier, perhaps a full year earlier. Had that been the case, Lyndon Johnson's decision to reverse course might have come before the majority of American combat casualties, and it might have come without his having to leave the presidency.

By slowing the flow of dissent against the war into normal political channels, the antiwar movement abetted the paralysis of the Johnson administration and gave it more time to fail. The movement therefore contributed to

[29] Mueller, *War, Presidents and Public Opinion*, p. 164.

[30] Robinson, "Public Reaction to Political Protest," pp. 1–9.

[31] Cited in John Mueller, "Reflections on the Vietnam Antiwar Movement and on the Curious Calm at the War's End," in *Vietnam as History: Ten Years after the Paris Peace Accords*, ed. Peter Braestrup (Washington, D.C.: The Wilson Center and University Press of America, 1984), p. 152.

[32] See Robinson, "Public Reaction to Political Protest," pp. 1–9.

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conditions under which American soldiers were being killed by the thousands every year, without result.

At the time, of course, Johnson administration officials did not know that their military strategy was a loser. But they did have the effect of the antiwar movement pegged right. As McGeorge Bundy wrote to President Johnson in November 1967, just after the march on the Pentagon: "One of the few things that helps us right now is the public distaste for violent doves. . . . "[33]

Hanoi and the Wise Men

According to some hawks, antiwar protests may have been counterproductive to limiting U.S. military activities in Southeast Asia in another way: their encouraging effect on Hanoi. Richard Nixon made this point repeatedly throughout 1966 and 1967; so did Secretary of State Dean Rusk. Even James Reston argued that "lawless" demonstrations "are not promoting peace but postponing it. They are not persuading the President or the Congress to end the war but deceiving Ho Chi Minh and General Giap into prolonging it."[34] Had antiwar protests not occurred, the argument could still be made, the war could have been stopped by negotiation or won outright in a much shorter time.

However intuitive it seems, there is virtually no evidence for this view. While Hanoi must have been encouraged by antiwar protests, the Vietnamese government has since revealed that it expected U.S. military failure to produce antiwar sentiment in America, not the other way around. There is no evidence that North Vietnam ever considered antiwar activity as a major factor in the war's outcome.

It may nevertheless be true that the antiwar movement indirectly helped to de-escalate the war by influencing the judgment of President Johnson and his closest advisors, the so-called Wise Men. Johnson and his colleagues seem to have misread both public opinion and the power of the antiwar movement at a critical moment in the aftermath of the Tet Offensive, mistaking the relationship between street protest and the ever-plummeting popularity of the war and the administration.[35]

During the Tet Offensive itself, support for the war rose briefly in a rally-round-the-flag burst of emotion. Then in late February came a sharp downward blip in opinion polls. This downward shift was partly encouraged by Walter Cronkite's first public expression of deep pessimism about the war, but it also included a "correction," so to speak, for the upward spike of a few weeks before. To the Wise Men, however, the downward spike appeared not

[33] Cited in Charles DeBenedetti (with Charles Chatfield), *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1990), p. 211.

[34] James Reston, "Washington: The Stupidity of Intelligence," *New York Times*, Oct. 17, 1965, p. E10.

[35] The best account of this period remains Herbert Schandler, *Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam: The Unmaking of a President* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977).

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as a statistical correction but as a more profound shift, possibly because, for other reasons entirely, their own views had shifted as well.

The antiwar movement may thus have influenced the course of the war in some fashion through its influence on the Wise Men at a crucial moment, but if so, the influence did not occur in the manner suggested by either the movement's detractors or devotees. It did not subvert government policy but unwittingly helped sustain it. It did not drive public opinion to oppose the war but retarded its shift in that direction. At most, the antiwar movement was a once- or twice-removed psychological factor contributing to the irresolution of a small group of important people already tormented by doubts about the effectiveness of U.S. policy. But this last possibility is speculation, and unlikely speculation at that. Other far more important political and military factors probably influenced the Wise Men to recommend a change of course to President Johnson.

A Convenient Amnesia

The juxtaposition of the conventional wisdom about the antiwar movement and the best data we have on American public opinion and government policies leads to an obvious question: How is this wide divergence possible? How could an unmistakable dynamic like the negative-follower effect be overlooked for so long, while romantic myths of one kind or another have remained articles of faith fervently believed by Left and Right alike? The most probable explanation is that many veterans of the sixties have a powerful personal stake—a psychological stake—in interpretations that overlook the facts for the sake of protecting edited memories and emotion-laden decisions made long ago.

The sixties are for many a paradise not quite lost. Many old protestors—including some who have risen to high positions in academia, journalism, and government—cannot break emotionally with the halcyon sixties, however much they may have shifted intellectually or even politically. Such "refugees" from the antiwar movement and counterculture (including today both the president and the vice president of the United States) may address other issues with maturity and reason, but memories of youthful energies and enthusiasms—all bound up with the "cause" that defined them—still blind them to the realities of the Vietnam era. It is that wistful blindness, in turn, that accounts for the sometimes perverse avoidance of responsibility for their own acts, for the presumption that ideological exuberance is self-justifying, without a real price for the person or nation.[36] Thus, we can understand better not only the persistent enthusiasm shown for the sixties but the penchant for new enthusiasms, for, in effect, a "revival." As we saw briefly in the rise of a movement to protest

[36] The collapse of the European Communist governments in 1989 occasioned a similar kind of silence on the Left. See Eugene D. Genovese, "The Question," *Dissent*, Summer 1994, pp. 371–76.

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U.S. policy during the Kuwait crisis of 1990–91, some veterans of the radical movement yearn for a *new* New Left and even manage to persuade themselves that the violence resorted to by the old New Left was perpetrated in the main by FBI provocateurs.[37]

Conclusion

To get beyond the mad clatter of Vietnam may take another twenty-five years. The Civil War, after all, did not settle comfortably into the American memory until most of those who fought it were dead, and even today that "war of the heart" raises hackles. Most sixties radicals will never admit that they were wrong, or used, or failures. Nor will they admit that their leftward lurch in the sixties permanently disfigured the liberal project and even the meaning of the word "liberal." Many hawks, too, will never be able to come to grips with the fact that the Vietnam War was not lost by deceit, cowardice, or subversion on the home front, but by the very best and the very brightest U.S. civilian and military officials.

Ironically, then, U.S. government decision makers and antiwar protestors alike failed to translate their mainly good intentions into positive consequences. The antiwar movement did not save lives but probably cost them, not by materially aiding and abetting the enemy, but by unwittingly aiding and abetting the paralysis of the Johnson administration. On the other hand, American failure in Vietnam was not the fault of the antiwar movement but of the failed strategies of at least two and perhaps three administrations.

Indeed, the Johnson and Nixon administrations and the antiwar movement all made long-lasting, generative errors that tended to compound one another. At a crucial moment, the Johnson administration and its fabled Wise Men seem to have accorded a greater impact to the antiwar movement than it had and may have given it more influence than it deserved. The administration also underestimated the intellectual frailty of its own military establishment. The radical antiwar movement, on the other hand, thought itself impotent to change the course of events in Southeast Asia and underestimated the Johnson administration's irresolution and confusion. It thus turns out that the Johnson administration's misbegotten search-and-destroy military strategy helped the Viet Cong and Hanoi, while the radical antiwar movement helped the Johnson administration. Had this not contributed to the deaths of more than fifty-eight thousand Americans, it would almost be amusing—O. Henry's *The Gift of the Magi* applied in sadness to war rather than in joy to love.

Is it true, as Nietzsche said, that "the errors of great men are venerable because they are more fruitful than the truths of little men"? No. They are only more horrible. The errors of those who wielded real power, in the White House

[37] See Norman Birnbaum quoted in Ronald Radosh, "The Know-Nothing Left," *Second Thoughts*, Summer 1989, p. 1.

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and the Pentagon, were indeed more horrible in their consequences than the errors of those whose power was so modest. How could it have been otherwise? As we rake through the debris of the cold war's end and remember Vietnam—surely the most painful detour of an otherwise difficult but successful journey—we would do well to bear this in mind.

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No Discharge from That War

McNamara and the Civil War at Home

by Angelo M. Codevilla

Today there is no longer any doubt: the Vietnam War was indeed a civil war—among Americans. To be sure, North Vietnam (aided by the Soviet Union and, to a lesser extent, China) attacked and conquered South Vietnam. In the process, it set up the National Liberation Front, a puppet insurgency that foreigners so inclined took to be the main antagonist to the government of South Vietnam (and of which nothing has been heard for twenty years). But the outcome of the war never hinged on the "hearts and minds" of Vietnamese villagers caught in the crossfire. Nor did it hinge on clashes between Soviet-manufactured and American-manufactured military equipment. Rather, it hinged on struggles among Americans at home, above all on the evolution of the mentality of American elites. In short, the Vietnam War came to be less about what way of life would predominate in Southeast Asia than about who, and whose values, should rule in the United States of America. That is why, although the shooting in Vietnam stopped two decades ago, the sniping over Vietnam shows no signs of abating in America.

The passing of a generation, and indeed the passing of the Soviet Union, have changed neither the attitudes nor the cast of characters on either side of this American civil war. The reason is that Vietnam was only a catalyst for the revolution of mores and priorities we now call the sixties. That revolution happened above all in the hearts, minds, and habits of our liberal elites. As the revolution progressed, they drew ever sharper distinctions between their sophisticated, broad-minded, and overwhelmingly secular selves and their patriotic, dutiful, and generally religious fellow Americans—many of whom came in turn to look upon the liberals as enemies of domestic virtue and as too friendly with foreign enemies. At the height of the war, the country of Vietnam was a piece of some value—a bishop, perhaps, or a knight. Today, it is merely a pawn in the ongoing American struggle over which group's values and lifestyle are to be publicly celebrated and which are to be publicly scorned.

Thus, when Robert McNamara published a book apologizing for his having been "tragically wrong" about Vietnam, he did not abandon the side he had chosen thirty years ago. Rather, his contrition was for not having cast

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his lot earlier and more decisively with those Americans who believed that it would be better for Vietnam, the world, and the United States itself if South Vietnam were defeated. Although McNamara's book, *In Retrospect,* shocked uninformed Americans who remember him as the man most responsible for waging the American war in Vietnam, those who struggled for America's victory had always known him as their most formidable enemy, while those who wanted America defeated counted on him. No sooner had the book appeared than President Clinton, echoing many on that side, said the book "vindicated" him.

Part of that vindication, indeed part of the consummation of that side's victory, is the Clinton administration's decision to establish "normal" relations between those who won the war in Southeast Asia and those who won the civil war in the United States. In that effort, the ideological Left is now joined by what Marxists might call the "objective" left, namely, those big businesses who profit from government favor and for whom Vietnam is the latest excuse to garner contracts subsidized by the U.S. taxpayer. Thus, McNamara's book represents an offensive in a two-pronged campaign to get the American people to admit that they were on the wrong side, and to get them to pay tribute and homage to the winners. Let us see how this is so.

McNamara's book is an account of an intellectual evolution. It shows how, as the war progressed, the U.S. secretary of defense gradually concluded that the conservative tendency of the American people—not the Communists of Moscow, Beijing, or Hanoi—was the greater threat to the world. During the sixties—a decade that really began circa 1965—the minds of countless other elite Americans similarly molted and "greened," forming in time a coherent, self-conscious tribe. Each "greening" was unique. McNamara, for example, bucked a big trend by not trading in the wife of his youth. But his intellectual odyssey is typical enough to warrant attention.

The years leading up to World War II taught Robert McNamara and most liberals of his generation the danger of letting the enemies of peace have their way. The war filled him with pride as an American. But his education, which gave him all too hazy a notion of his civilization, taught him with absolute certainty that the world could achieve peace and progress only through collective security and "modern" analytical methods. Moreover, the higher he rose, the more he learned to look down on Americans less well connected, whom he assumed to be, in his own words, not nearly so "hard-headed" and "soft-hearted." By the end of the process, McNamara had ceased to think of the world's totalitarians as enemies of peace and instead applied that label to America's own conservatives.

The key to understanding McNamara's mind is that it is hermetically sealed against the real world by an arrogance born of class-consciousness and an overweening faith in methodology. In time, his commitment to his class and intellectual tools muddled other commitments, including that to his country and its stand against communism. In due course, he and others of his class discovered what they judged to be the central truth of modern life, namely, that nuclear weapons forever shrank into insignificance all virtues and vices, and that the

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pearl to be sought at any price was avoidance of nuclear war. As this discovery took hold of his mind, it reordered his life—of which the Vietnam War was a part. He became ever more solicitous of America's "best and brightest," who wanted the Age of Aquarius to triumph at home and abroad. These people, McNamara tells us, understood the truth of the nuclear age. And just to make sure we do too, he appends to this book on Vietnam a chapter restating this truth. It follows that as he became possessed of this gnosis McNamara became even less responsive to the views, votes, and lives of all those Americans who remained ignorant of it. Today, while apologizing to his tribe—which made all the decisions about the war and did next to none of the military service—McNamara patronizes the ordinary Americans who did the serving and the dying by telling his tribe not to be too hard on the poor saps. But blame of the poor saps' culture is the thread that binds the book together, a thread that becomes a hawser by the end.

McNamara's mind is hermetically sealed against the real world.

Readers should place as much importance on the personal side of McNamara's story as the author himself does. It is the story of a self-absorbed brat. He tells us of the terrible danger he faced in World War II when, as a consultant, he had to cross the Atlantic in an airliner. He even bought life insurance at his own expense! He flaunts the military medal he got for writing a study, and the hardship his family faced. It seems they had medical bills. He brags about his physical condition and tells us that his views on public policy were influenced by his teenage daughter. She spent thirty-three terrible hours once on a bus to attend one of Martin Luther King's marches, and daddy called President Johnson about it. His wife died in her sixties, and this book on Vietnam is a celebration of their relationship worthy, almost, of Oprah. He also tells us that he himself had "developed at Harvard" the heretofore unknown art of tailoring means to ends. So full of himself was Robert McNamara that he never brooked questioning from those he considered less brilliant, as a national television audience learned on March 2, 1966, when he expelled reporter Henry Bradsher from a press conference for observing that one of McNamara's documents required the existence of military units that McNamara was eliminating. But he reserved most of his considerable reservoir of contempt—as he reminds us every few pages—for the real problem, the deadliest danger, the American Right. What did it do to earn it?

The Kennedy and Johnson administrations, McNamara tells us, did not see that the premises underlying their policy in Vietnam were self-contradictory: South Vietnam's independence was vital to the United States, but the war would have to be won or lost by the South Vietnamese themselves. A third premise, which is absent at the beginning of the book but appears over and over as the story unfolds, was that saving South Vietnam simply was not worth the risk of confrontation with the Soviet Union or China. That an attempt to adhere to all these premises at once virtually guaranteed an American defeat should have been obvious to anyone with elementary knowledge of logic and history. Indeed, many conservatives, then led by Barry Goldwater, pointed out the

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contradictions and their likely consequences. But McNamara dismissed Goldwater as a dangerous primitive. And now, in a book whose intellectual theme is the consequence of the contradiction of his own premises, he still gives these critics no credit. On the contrary, he makes them the chief villains of the story. For if the "best and the brightest" of his tribe did not understand things as clearly as was their wont, it was "largely because the top East Asian and China experts in the State Department—John Paton Davies Jr., John Stuart Service, and John Carter Vincent—had been purged during the McCarthy hysteria of the 1950s." Here we have a typical New Age confession in that it deals mostly with others' sins.

Having committed themselves to Vietnam, McNamara and his liberal colleagues assiduously applied the latest and best analysis available, with the result that they gradually escalated the fighting in Vietnam, hoping to convince the North Vietnamese that neither side could win. Instead, every few months, fresh evidence would arrive to suggest that these actions were convincing North Vietnam of precisely the opposite. So every few months, McNamara and his colleagues came to what they saw as another "watershed," or fork in the road: Should we send more troops and bomb a bit more, or should we ask the North for the terms on which they would let us depart in peace? Time after time the brilliant ones opted to do both at once—but not before dismissing the suggestion that another option existed, namely, to win the war by deposing the Hanoi regime. Twenty years later in a book whose most common phrase is "we failed to ask [the relevant questions]," McNamara makes it clear that, for him, the truly important fight was the one to keep the question of defeating North Vietnam *out* of serious discussion.

The bulk of *In Retrospect* consists of dreary accounts of memos to and from Dean (Rusk), Mac (Bundy), Bus (Wheeler), et al., all of which and all of whom side-stepped the choice between doing what was necessary to win and accepting one set of costs, or pulling out and accepting another set of costs. McNamara repeatedly asks how such demigods could have failed to understand that there was no real alternative to cutting losses and accepting defeat. His halfhearted reminders that these were busy men with many claims on their attention, and that various subordinates' staff papers lacked clarity, are unconvincing. That is so because the book's most passionate passages describe how the unwelcome alternatives occasionally did loom out of the fog, and how doggedly McNamara fought for obfuscation.

Thus, on December 1, 1964, the president's high-level working group on Vietnam produced a paper on what it would take to win in Vietnam. The group wrote:

> We cannot guarantee to maintain a non-communist South Vietnam short of committing ourselves to whatever degree of military action would be required to defeat North Vietnam and probably Communist China militarily. Such a commitment would involve high risks of a major conflict in Asia, which could not be confined to air and naval action but would almost inevitably involve a Korean style ground action and possibly even the use of nuclear weapons at some point.

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The panel thought the risks "more acceptable than the alternative of continuing our present course or withdrawal from Southeast Asia." But by the time McNamara had finished influencing the report, the two alternatives to the present scope of activity consisted merely of two sets of bombing targets, one more modest than the other. The stark alternatives of real war and real withdrawal were gone. Why? Because McNamara judged the mere possibility of air strikes near China (which had no capacity at all to hit the United States) as "almost surely an act of suicide," since China had nuclear weapons and McNamara's gnosis said that this would lead to a nuclear holocaust. And nobody who might be inclined to ask McNamara why that might be so had the standing to pose the question to him.

What of the public? McNamara thought that his Vietnam strategy should not be put to public discussion at all because "pressure from ultraconservative forces in both parties" would be brought to bear on behalf of decisive military action or a pullout. "The President," so the man who advised him now complains, "dealt with this dilemma by obscuring it." McNamara's main worry about pauses in the bombing was that their lack of success in ending the war would strengthen the hand of conservatives. In fact, every time McNamara refers to public opinion, he sees reckless right-wingers. He feared that advocates of Senator Richard Russell's "get it over with or get out" approach appeared to be gaining in popularity, and he tells us that the ones who wanted to win "worried us most." Again and again he is worried about the Right. In the end, although McNamara did not succeed in bending Hanoi to his will, he did impose his own will at home.

We have a typical New Age confession dealing mostly with others' sins.

What was the source of his putative wisdom in these matters? Certainly not international experience. McNamara writes of meeting with former president Eisenhower, the man who won World War II in Europe and emphatically believed that his threat to employ nuclear weapons had ended the Korean War. Ike said that Hanoi had "appealed to force," and that "we have got to win." The Joint Chiefs of Staff and congressional committees, whose collective expertise in military matters far exceeded McNamara's, made similar arguments. Why not bomb the Red River dikes and flush Hanoi away? Why not invade North Vietnam and destroy the regime? Here is one of McNamara's answers: "Dean and I were fearful of right wing pressure to attack targets near the China border." And here is what he considered sage advice: "I urged Johnson to accompany additional ground deployments with some kind of political program—a pause or what have you." Here is more wisdom: "Action sufficient to topple the Hanoi regime will put us into war with the Soviet Union or China." But of course he failed to show why those regimes would have wanted to "commit suicide" themselves in a foredoomed effort to save Ho Chi Minh. Nor did McNamara or anyone else who held that position change it after 1968 when China's overriding priority obviously became to get American help against the Soviet Union!

The strength of McNamara's arguments, then and now, came not from the logic of history or the ballot box but from the ethos of his establishment

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tribe. McNamara tells us that he followed the lead of those "he cared about most," including a family friend, Sam Brown (who made a career out of trying to defeat the United States). In the end, McNamara told President Johnson that the worst possible outcome of the war would be the United States's destruction of the Hanoi regime, and he refrained from branding the Hanoi regime as an evil enemy lest doing so give aid and comfort to the American Right.

The obfuscations of systems analysis and McNamara's variety of social and intellectual prejudices thus gradually led the secretary of defense to work for the defeat of the very armed forces entrusted to his care. Nor did his influence cease when he "stepped down" (or was fired) in 1967, for by then the tribal ethos was conquering the American political establishment. Thus, Richard Nixon—who had taken oaths and made public pledges to lead America to victory in Vietnam—lowered his sights, and Henry Kissinger, who had written books pointing out the fallacies in McNamara's nuclear theories, embraced these theories in more radical form. In sum, America's establishment acted as if the positions that lost at the Democratic Party's 1968 convention, and in the national elections of 1968 and 1972, had actually triumphed across the board. By the 1980s, not even Ronald Reagan said about Vietnam what he had said in 1964: that America could have and should have won the war by destroying the Communist regime.

This is not the place to recount how General Vo Nguyen Giap's conquest of South Vietnam embarrassed the wise men who held that victory for either side was impossible; nor how the millions who fled the holocaust in Southeast Asia confounded the liberals who said that Vietnam would be "better off" under the Communists, or that defeat in Vietnam was necessary to save America's soul. Just reread Jimmy Carter's Notre Dame speech of 1978. For the man who drafted that speech, Anthony Lake, is now national security advisor to a president, Bill Clinton, who dodged the draft, opposed the war, and hated the military of which he is now commander in chief. Is there any doubt anymore that Vietnam was an American civil war, lost by those who believed that America was good and communism bad, and won by those who believed that America was bad and were prepared to give communism the benefit of the doubt?

The War Over Normalization

That is still the fundamental question about Vietnam: Is the Hanoi regime good or bad? Should it have won the war, or should the United States have won? If that regime is hostile to us and to the welfare and freedom of its own people, then we ought to do nothing to help it. If, by contrast, the Hanoi regime is good, then we should side *with* it against its own domestic enemies. Not surprisingly, the same people who thought the Hanoi regime "good" thirty years ago by and large think it "good" now, or at least good enough to extend to it the same privileges we extend to friends and allies. That is what the decision to establish full diplomatic relations with the Stalinist clique in Hanoi is all about.

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But that is not what we are told, of course. Instead, we hear that Vietnam can become a counterweight to China and a boon to American business, and that remaining questions about American servicemen missing in action can be more readily answered through normalization. In other words, we *need* Hanoi. What is more, say its proponents, normalization will surely speed Hanoi's adoption of free-market principles, gradually undermine communism, and propel the country into the ranks of Asia's economic tigers. But the validity of this argument depends on how one understands the difference between communist regimes and the "free market." To be sure, in Vietnam, as in China and Russia, government officials no longer decry business. Indeed, they openly engage in it and make no secret that they want to get rich. It is worth noting, however, that the only novelty in this is the candor.

In tyrannies, wealth always flows to those in proximity to the tyrants. No one is suggesting that in today's Vietnam, any more than in China or Russia, wealth is less dependent on political connection than previously, or that respect for property rights is any more widespread. It is far from clear whether the label "market economy," lately put on the prehensile policies of communist bureaucrats, lightens or aggravates the regime's burdens on ordinary people. There is indeed a big difference between the Hanoi regime's economics today and those of twenty years ago. But American liberals who favor normalization have not made the case that the difference is good for the Vietnamese people or for the American people. Moreover, the fact that they deemed the Hanoi regime "good" even before economic reform diminishes the credibility of their argument

No one denies that there is money to be made in Vietnam.

When it comes to politics, no one claims that the Hanoi regime has changed since the days of the war. Fewer than fifty people have ever belonged to the Politburo that is the country's only real legislature, executive, judiciary, and source of personal fortune or calamity. All the Politburo's deliberations are secret, and no dissent is allowed from any of its decisions. Some argue that this is acceptable because, in Asia, authoritarian government can coexist with liberal economics. This is nonsense. In Singapore, for instance, the economic order is based on a thoroughly British code of laws and a well-earned reputation for impartial justice. The difference between Vietnam and Singapore is no secret to those who recognized Hanoi. They just do not care much about it.

By the same token, no one denies that there is money to be made in Vietnam. Just as in China, foreign investors are lining up to take advantage of unbelievably low wage scales for intelligent, highly motivated workers. But, as in China, there is a catch. The government wants to be paid up front for the privilege it grants to foreign companies to exploit local laborers. Thus, international companies ask their home governments to make payments to Vietnamese authorities in the form of "development assistance." Having bought the privilege of renting virtual slave labor, the companies know they will have to pay to keep it. Since rates for taxes or bribes are set by bureaucrats rather than by law, the companies know that their investment can be rendered worthless at any time—even *The New York Times* has called this practice "the art of the raw

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deal." That is why companies investing in Vietnam or China insist that their investments be insured by their home governments through publicly financed institutions like our Overseas Private Investment Corporation. They also insist that their governments insure the loans used to finance Vietnamese purchases. In other words, they are eager to go into Vietnam, but at the expense of their own countries' taxpayers.

It is easy enough to see why the Hanoi regime desires such a relationship. Vietnamese officials know that once money and assets are in the country, no one but they will control them. The capacity to grant or deny access to thousands of jobs at wages somewhat superior to prevailing semistarvation rates would add greatly to Hanoi's ability to control the common people. Furthermore, the capacity to channel many millions of dollars to favorites will strengthen Hanoi's grip on its own organization, allowing the most ambitious members of society to satisfy their desires for a better life within a framework dictated by the Communist party. And, of course, Communist bosses look forward to upgrading their already opulent lifestyles.

The American Left sides with the Hanoi regime for "ancestral" reasons.

It is hard to understand why average Americans would be eager to subsidize exploitative deals principally of benefit to Communist bosses and their American corporate collaborators. It is even harder to understand why the Clinton administration's self-styled liberals, who profess to champion the world's downtrodden, favor using taxpayer money to finance the exploitation of Vietnamese coolies. The explanation can only be that the American Left sides with the Hanoi regime for "ancestral" reasons. Normalization means "vindication" for those who gave aid and comfort long ago to a regime with which the United States was at war in all but the legal sense. Now, to launder themselves and counter criticism, the tribesmen yearn for confirmation that they were right all along. And what better laundry soap to employ than one stamped with the official seal of U.S. diplomacy and perfumed with capitalism.

The saddest evidence of this is the contemptuous way in which the advocates of normalization deal with the fact that hundreds of American fliers, known by their fellow prisoners of war to have been alive in North Vietnamese prisons, have never returned home. In fairness, it must be said that these advocates follow in the footsteps of administrations of both parties which (with different rhetorical dressing) have tended to regard the eyewitness testimony of former POWs as not definitive; put the burden of proof on the families of unaccounted-for Americans rather than their putative captors; keep raising the standard for proof when circumstantial evidence accumulates; and are content to rely for their information on North Vietnamese officials who have an enormous stake in obscuring the truth. But the Clinton administration has gone a step further, relegating the issue of Americans left behind in Vietnam to the rank of an impediment to "serious" business. Administration officials also openly assert that they and North Vietnamese officials working together are the party of reason, peace, and cooperation, while those who are agitating on behalf of

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Americans left behind are at best just an interest group, and at worst the same aggressive personalities who were the real enemies in the sixties.

Today, the Vietnam War and its repercussions comprise only a sideshow in a bigger cultural conflict. In today's main theaters of operations, namely, the struggles over education, family policy, racial preferences, and so forth, McNamara's tribe appears to be losing ground, while its "objective" allies, the beneficiaries of government subsidies, are not faring well either. But in the field of national defense, McNamara's legacy has barely been challenged. Clark Clifford, Melvin Laird, James Schlesinger, Caspar Weinberger, Richard Cheney, Harold Brown, and William Perry all lived in the house that McNamara built and did no significant remodeling. All of McNamara's concepts—measured escalation, punitive (not decisive) use of force, crisis management, and mutual assured destruction—are still canonical. Most shameful of all, the decision to bless the Hanoi regime establishes as part of the official American mind-set the notion that America's wars will end with America's enemies masters of their own house—and of any Americans who may happen to be in it.

Newspaper readers were shocked to read in February 1995 that the U.S. armed forces have been training members how to conduct themselves as prisoners of war, and that the training consists primarily of accustoming them to physical, and even sexual, abuse. Then in May, an American pilot was shot down by Bosnian Serbs, and until he was rescued, the nation wondered what the Serbs would do to him—not what we would do to the Serbs. Not so long ago, an American could confront his captors much as the young Julius Caesar confronted the pirates who had captured his ship. According to Plutarch, Caesar told his captors that in taking a Roman they had put themselves in mortal jeopardy, but that if they were extra kind to him he would do what he could to spare their lives. He ended up crucifying the lot of them, and Rome endured for another half a millennium. By contrast, the United States now embraces the regime that tortured our airmen in North Vietnam and deems it normal to instruct our young men and women how to submit to rape at the hands of Iraqis, Serbs, and whomever. The decision to normalize relations with Vietnam underlines that this, too, is a legacy of McNamara's war.

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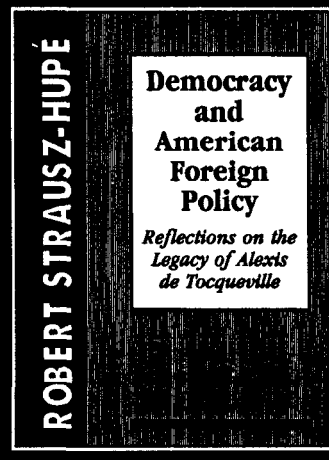

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No Discharge from That War

On Recognizing Hanoi

Remarks by President Clinton
On the Normalization of Diplomatic Relations with Vietnam

Thank you very much. I welcome you all here, those of you have been introduced and distinguished members of Congress and military leaders, veterans, others who are in the audience.

Today I am announcing the normalization of diplomatic relationships with Vietnam.

From the beginning of this administration, any improvement in relationships between America and Vietnam has depended upon making progress on the issue of Americans who were missing in action or held as prisoners of war. Last year, I lifted the trade embargo on Vietnam in response to their cooperation, and to enhance our efforts to secure the remains of lost Americans and to determine the fate of those whose remains have not been found.

It has worked. In seventeen months, Hanoi has taken important steps to help us resolve many cases. Twenty-nine families have received the remains of their loved ones and at last have been able to give them a proper burial. Hanoi has delivered to us hundreds of pages of documents shedding light on what happened to Americans in Vietnam. And Hanoi has stepped up its cooperation with Laos, where many Americans were lost.

We have reduced the number of so-called discrepancy cases, in which we have had reason to believe that Americans were still alive after they were lost, to fifty-five. And we will continue to work to resolve more cases.

Hundreds of dedicated men and women are working on all these cases, often under extreme hardship and real dangers in the mountains and jungles of Indochina. On behalf of all Americans, I want to thank them. And I want to pay a special tribute to General John Vessey, who has worked so tirelessly on this issue for Presidents Reagan and Bush and for our administration. He has made a great difference to a great many families. And we as a nation are grateful for his dedication and for his service. Thank you, sir.

On July 11, 1995, President Bill Clinton announced in a brief White House ceremony that he was extending full diplomatic relations to Vietnam. Following the president's announcement, Senator Robert Dole delivered a response from the Senate floor.

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I also want to thank the presidential delegation, led by Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Hershel Gober, Winston Lord, James Wold, who have helped us to make so much progress on this issue. And I am especially grateful to the leadership of the families and the veterans organizations who have worked with the delegation and maintained their extraordinary commitment to finding the answers we seek.

Never before in the history of warfare has such an extensive effort been made to resolve the fate of soldiers who did not return. Let me emphasize, normalization of our relations with Vietnam is not the end of our effort. From the early days of this administration I have said to the families and veterans groups what I say again here: We will keep working until we get all the answers we can. Our strategy is working. Normalization of relations is the next appropriate step. With this new relationship, we will be able to make more progress. To that end, I will send another delegation to Vietnam this year. And Vietnam has pledged it will continue to help us find answers. We will hold them to that pledge.

By helping to bring Vietnam into the community of nations, normalization also serves our interest in working for a free and peaceful Vietnam in a stable and peaceful Asia. We will begin to normalize our trade relations with Vietnam, whose economy is now liberalizing and integrating into the economy of the Asia-Pacific region. Our policy will be to implement the appropriate United States government programs to develop trade with Vietnam consistent with U.S. law.

As you know, many of these programs require certifications regarding human rights and labor rights before they can proceed. We have already begun discussing human rights issues with Vietnam, especially issues regarding religious freedom. Now we can expand and strengthen that dialogue. The Secretary of State will go to Vietnam in August where he will discuss all of these issues, beginning with our POW and MIA concerns.

I believe normalization and increased contact between Americans and Vietnamese will advance the cause of freedom in Vietnam, just as it did in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. I strongly believe that engaging the Vietnamese on the broad economic front of economic reform and the broad front of democratic reform will help to honor the sacrifice of those who fought for freedom's sake in Vietnam.

I am proud to be joined in this view by distinguished veterans of the Vietnam War. They served their country bravely. They are of different parties. A generation ago they had different judgements about the war which divided us so deeply. But today they are of a single mind. They agree that the time has come for America to move forward on Vietnam. All Americans should be grateful especially that Senators John McCain, John Kerry, Bob Kerrey, Chuck Robb and Representative Pete Peterson, along with other Vietnam veterans in the Congress, including Senator Harkin, Congressman Colby and Congressman Gilchrist, who just left, and others who are out here in the audience have kept up their passionate interest in Vietnam, but were able to move beyond the haunting and painful past toward finding common ground for the future. Today,

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they and many other veterans support the normalization of relations, giving the opportunity to Vietnam to fully join the community of nations and being true to what they fought for so many years ago.

Whatever we may think about the political decisions of the Vietnam era, the brave Americans who fought and died there had noble motives. They fought for the freedom and the independence of the Vietnamese people. Today the Vietnamese are independent, and we believe this step will help to extend the reach of freedom in Vietnam and, in so doing, to enable these fine veterans of Vietnam to keep working for that freedom.

This step will also help our own country to move forward on an issue that has separated Americans from one another for too long now. Let the future be our destination. We have so much work ahead of us. This moment offers us the opportunity to bind up our own wounds. They have resisted time for too long. We can now move on to common ground. Whatever divided us before let us consign to the past. Let this moment, in the words of the Scripture, be a time to heal and a time to build.

Thank you all. And God bless America.

Remarks by Senator Robert Dole
Responding to President Clinton's Announcement

President Clinton announced today that he was taking steps to normalize U.S. diplomatic relations with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. In his statement, President Clinton cited progress in POW/MIA cooperation.

Unfortunately, President Clinton did not address the central issue: is Vietnam continuing to withhold information and remains which could easily be provided? The President ignored this question in announcing his decision—for the very good reason that all signs point to Vietnam willfully withholding information which could resolve the fate of many Americans lost in the war.

On Veterans Day in 1992, President-elect Clinton stated, "There will be no normalization of relations with any nation that is at all suspected of withholding any information." That was President-elect Clinton's standard. The standard was not simply cooperation. The standard was not simply allowing field operations. The 1992 standard was *at all suspected of withholding any information*. By 1994, the standard has clearly changed from suspected of withholding information to selective cooperation. As I said yesterday, if President Clinton was unable to state unequivocally that Vietnam had done all it could do to provide information on POWs and MIAs, it would be a strategic, diplomatic and moral mistake to begin business as usual with Vietnam.

President Clinton has made his decision today. Congress has no say in this decision. In the coming weeks and months, Congress will monitor the progress of relations with Vietnam. Our role will not be passive. Congress must approve any additional funds for U.S. diplomatic operations in Vietnam. The

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Senate must confirm any U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam. Any further improvement in relations will require action by Congress—granting of Most Favored Nation status or beginning any operations by the Export-Import Bank, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, or the Trade and Development Agency.

President Clinton said today that we should look to the future. I agree that we should look to the future, and examine future Vietnamese cooperation on POW/MIA issues, as well as their record on human rights in the aftermath of today's announcement. But as we look to the future we will not forget the past—especially the importance of doing all we can to resolve the fate of those Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam.

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Fault Lines and Factions in the Russian Army

by Timothy L. Thomas

The army is starting to disintegrate a bit. We have to be tough and firm so military people believe that there will be reforms."[1] Thus did President Boris Yeltsin attempt to put the best face on the events of 1994, a year of disarray, decay, and dissension in the Russian military that climaxed in December's botched intervention in Chechnya.

Nearly every aspect of military activity—from training, supply, coordination among services, strategy, tactics, morale, and fighting spirit—failed the test of battle, feeding a growing resentment among the military leaders toward Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and, more serious still, increasing the potential for a breakup of the Russian armed forces into feuding factions. In addition, with parliamentary and presidential elections on the horizon, ultra-nationalist and extremist candidates and political parties are bound to exploit these rifts to their benefit. That is why the serious trouble in which the Russian armed forces find themselves ought to be a cause for concern, not gloating, in the West. The stakes are enormous.

Even before the introduction of perestroika by former general secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet army showed signs of groaning under the weight of its commitment to defend the Soviet state and Warsaw Pact. Gorbachev's glasnost campaign then exposed the economic damage done by military overspending, the myth of the military's superiority to other Soviet institutions, and, in some cases, its sheer incompetence. Prestige and morale among officers and enlisted men plummeted.

In April 1992, a few months after the abolition of the Soviet Union and Gorbachev's departure from the political scene, President Yeltsin named General

[1] *Moscow Tribune*, Feb. 24, 1995.

Timothy L. Thomas (LTC retired) is an analyst at the Foreign Military Studies Office at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This article was prepared as part of the author's work as a government employee. The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. government. Mr. Thomas has served as Director of Soviet Studies at the United States Army Russian Institute (USARI) in Garmisch, Germany. He is currently an assistant editor at the journal *European Security*.

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Grachev the first Russian minister of defense since the time of the tsars. The choice provoked controversy, for Grachev had vaulted over many more senior officers despite mediocre performances at the military academies and lack of experience as a senior field commander. His reputation was based partly on his heroic exploits as an airborne division commander in Afghanistan, but above all on his firm support for Yeltsin during the coup attempt of August 1991. At that time, Grachev broke with conservative military leaders, such as Minister of Defense Dmitri Yazov, Commander in Chief of Ground Forces General Valentin Varennikov, and the other coup organizers. Grachev's fate thus became linked to Yeltsin's—and Yeltsin's to his.

The White House assault was one spectacular event in an ongoing process.

The armed forces under Grachev continued to decline from the time he assumed command, mainly owing to problems associated with making the transition to a democratic state. The time and money required to reconstruct the force structure and military-industrial complex (and adapt them to a new doctrine), establish a Russian (as opposed to Soviet) army, and redesign the conscription and contract services drained the military budget of badly needed funds. The lack of a sufficient budget, the spread of crime and black-market activities, political maneuvering by high-ranking officers, the requirements of peace operations and the withdrawal of forces from abroad, and the inability of the General Staff and Ground Forces to maintain operational competency (because money for training was almost nonexistent) accelerated the decline.

At the same time, Grachev lost credibility for his decision to fire on the recalcitrant Russian legislature holed up in Moscow's White House on the morning of October 4, 1993. Reluctant to draw the armed forces into Russia's internal political struggle, Grachev reportedly asked Yeltsin on behalf of the armed forces: "Boris Nikolayevich, are you giving me sanction to use tanks in Moscow?" At which point Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin rebuked Grachev: "Pavel Sergeyevich, what are you saying now? You've been assigned to command an operation. Why should the president decide what precise means you require for it!" To which Yeltsin replied, "I'll send you a written order."[2] At that moment, whether anyone realized it or not, Russia's security forces began to split into the regular, supposedly apolitical armed forces on one side, and what might be termed Yeltsin's praetorian guard on the other.

In hindsight, the assault on the White House was only one spectacular event in an ongoing process. With or without it, the post-Soviet environment of unremitting crisis was bound to fracture the Russian military to depths beyond that caused by ordinary cliques, missions, and friendships. The result has been a continued reluctance on the part of the military to yield control to civilians.

All the negative trends that first became evident in the Gorbachev era came together in 1994. Conflicts among members of the High Command spilled

[2] Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia*, trans. Catherine A. Fitzpatrick (New York: Random House, 1994), p. 278.

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into the open press. Civil-military issues, especially the budget, were hotly contested between Parliament and the Ministry of Defense, and a pentagon of interlocking crises eroded the unity and esprit de corps of the military despite—or because of—Grachev's reforms. These potentially divisive issues included (1) the emergence of rivalries between the elite and the non-elite within the armed forces; (2) the appearance of parallel armies and security services in open competition with one another for funds and missions; (3) incipient independent military districts bordering on "warlordism"; (4) a marked decline in combat readiness; and (5) the participation of uniformed officers in political factions and independent unions, some in open confrontation with one another. These five crises reinforce one another in such a way as to fragment the military along vertical and horizontal lines simultaneously.

Elite versus Non-Elite

Writing in *Nezavisimaya gazeta* in August 1994, retired colonel Yuri Deryugin noted, "Today's army is an army of polarities charged with the latent energy of internal conflict."[3] Taking a sociological approach, he divided the army into four factions: The first, composed of lieutenants and captains, he termed the pragmatists, who try to avoid going to hot spots and want to leave the service as soon as possible. The second, those ranking from major to front-line major general, he identified as the real servicemen; they support regulations, tradition, and order, have no other career prospects, and so remain on active duty. The third, the members of the "Arbat military district," he classified as those in the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff, whose prospects depend more on political patronage than military skills.[4] The fourth and last group he named were those of any rank who simply exploit their military service for private "commercial" gain. For example, General Vladimir Gladyshev, commander of the Russian military base in Georgia, reported that Russian troops in the Caucasus have become major suppliers of weapons to the area's combatants, including the rebels in Chechnya.[5]

Deryugin's classification is not wholly surprising. Officers at the high end of the career spectrum usually have a more comfortable lifestyle and desire to serve until their deaths. Those at the lower end of the spectrum, least looked after and least satisfied, have little reason to remain on active duty. The disconcerting fact is the intense level of dissatisfaction among junior officers, and the apparent inability of the Ministry of Defense to ensure even that personnel are paid on time or have a house, not a tent, for their families.

The danger in all this for Russian society, writes Deryugin, is the potential for organizational implosion. If the military becomes so stratified that servicemen lose all sense of tradition and loyalty, they may take matters into their own

[3] "Potential for Military Threat to State, Individuals," Joint Publications Research Service, *Military Affairs* (hereafter JPRS, *MA*), Sept. 7, 1994, p. 2, from *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Aug. 24, 1994.

[4] The Arbat is the area where the Russian Ministry of Defense is located.

[5] Aleksandr Golovkov and Sergei Leskov, "Top Guns," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, May/June 1995, p. 51.

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armed hands out of concern for themselves and their families. On the national pay scale, career officers now find themselves behind doormen at expensive Moscow restaurants and maids working for Russia's newly rich. Not surprisingly, many soldiers moonlight as bodyguards, taxi drivers, or security guards, and so have even less of a stake in military professionalism.[6]

Deryugin draws three conclusions. First, the Russian armed forces are so close to utter degradation that, to a certain extent, they are ceasing to be a means of guaranteeing security and are instead becoming themselves a threat to individuals, the state, and society. Secondly, the most significant threats to Russia are no longer external but internal. These might take the form of a social explosion within the armed forces, a disaster of a military-technical nature, conflict between the army and civil society, or the transformation of the army into a self-interested commercial organization, thereby criminalizing the minds of young recruits or even merging with the civilian mafia. Lastly, Deryugin fears, generals and officers may seek to save the army from breaking apart by aligning the units under their control with the most sympathetic political forces.[7] These threats are far removed from the traditional ones associated with a country's external security and national interests.

Parallel Security Services

In 1994, some of the Russian security services, along with elements of others (such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs [MVD] and army), were subordinated directly to the president. Whether this change to strengthen the president was a response to threats from elements within the security services or simply an attempt to stabilize Yeltsin's political base in Moscow is unknown. The army possesses the largest and most vocal portion of anti-Yeltsinites among the security services and has consistently appeared to be Yeltsin's least-favored son. Owing to the explosive situation in the military, Yeltsin may have foreseen the need to build a check against unreliable army units, or he may have been trying to ensure the presence of reliable units in case of further showdowns between the executive branch and Parliament. As *Moscow News* reported in early January:

> A direct hot line has recently been established in Boris Yeltsin's Kremlin office with the commanders of all army units. The trigger of the policy of strength is now always cocked. Armed organizations lack control in an unprecedented and frightening way. This, along with their mutual jealousy and rivalry, apparat struggles within the Defense Ministry, the MVD, and the FSK [Federal Counterintelligence Service], and the efforts of the civil nomenklatura groups to drag the power ministries to various political camps make Yeltsin keep his finger constantly on the hot line.[8]

[6] "Letter from Officer X," *Time*, Jan. 23, 1995, p. 48.

[7] "Potential for Military Threat," JPRS, *MA*, Sept. 7, 1994, p. 2.

[8] "Presidential Security Service Analyzed," JPRS, *MA*, Jan. 11, 1995, p. 28, from *Moscow News*, Dec. 30, 1994, through Jan. 5, 1995.

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The most important "parallel forces" at Yeltsin's disposal now include the Presidential Security Service, headed by Major General Aleksandr Korzhakov; the Main Administration for the Protection of the Russian Federation, headed by Lieutenant General Mikhail Barsukov; the Federal Agency of Government Communications and Information (FAPSI), headed by Lieutenant General Aleksandr Starovoitov; the Federal Counterintelligence Service; and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Colonel General Anatolii Kulikov. Perhaps even more telling than the formal chain of command of these organizations is the personal relationship between their commanders and President Yeltsin. Take, for example, the personality and reputed power of Korzhakov. He is widely recognized as Yeltsin's confidant, and it is said that Yeltsin takes no decision without Korzhakov's intervention, although Russian officials may exaggerate many of these stories. Nevertheless, one minister told an interviewer that on the eve of his appointment he was called to see Korzhakov and was happy that he was liked. On another occasion, Korzhakov reportedly sent a letter to Prime Minister Chernomyrdin with instructions not to reform the oil exporting system, which was under consideration at the time.[9] Still other individuals have accused Korzhakov of running the state, appointing ministers, commanding whole divisions of troops, and attempting to absorb the Federal Counterintelligence Service into the Presidential Security Service. Korzhakov does admit that a body to coordinate special services' activities may appear, but says he has no desire to lead such a body.[10] Of late, however, Korzhakov has received criticism from high-ranking officials, including Sergei Filatov, head of Yeltsin's presidential administration. Filatov claimed that some officials in the Kremlin now talk through pen and paper, fearing that their rooms are bugged by Korzhakov.[11]

FAPSI's relationship with the president is also of interest, for it ensures Yeltsin's control over the army's General Staff. In September 1993, the General Staff's communications center was switched off, paralyzing its command-and-control capacity. Now, even if top military command-and-control agencies are blocked, Starovoitov can ensure that the president will be able to issue orders directly to division commanders of his special units and to take over their command and control. Another step in establishing presidential control is a proposed military-policy directorate under Yeltsin crony Filatov. This directorate will perform functions similar to those undertaken by the old Communist Party's Central Committee department for administrative agencies, including hand-picking army commanders from the division level upward.[12]

[9] Ibid., p. 29.

[10] "Korzhakov Interviewed on Security Service, Politics," Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Central Eurasia* (hereafter FBIS, *CEura*), Jan. 19, 1995, pp. 13–15, from *Argumenty i fakty*, Jan. 3, 1995, p. 3.

[11] *Moscow Times*, Mar. 3, 1995.

[12] "Elite Units Moved to Moscow to Support Yeltsin," FBIS, *CEura*, Sept. 15, 1994, pp. 20–21, from *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Sept. 14, 1994.

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In August the Kremlin stated that it was considering the creation of an elite force or palace guard:

> The details are not known, but it [the presidential guard] is a question . . . of the deployment in direct proximity to Moscow of a number of the units withdrawn from Germany and the Baltic countries. It is on the basis of these and also on the basis of certain divisions of separate brigades (and regiments) of the Moscow Military District that a presidential guard will be formed.[13]

Personnel of these presidential units will enjoy extra pay and, within a year, most will have decent apartments. In fact, it appears that the closer a service is to the president, the better the pay. That may represent the single most important factor that charges internal dissent within the Russian force, as military officers transfer to the security services to obtain financial benefits. One analyst noted that a warrant officer of the Main Security Administration is paid more than a General Staff colonel.[14]

Critics of these special security services abound. Chief of the General Staff Mikhail Kolesnikov complained to a meeting of Parliament's Defense and Security Committee that parallel armies were appearing in the country because of this division. He was particularly concerned about financing all five armies, which he listed as the armed forces, the Federal Counterintelligence Service, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, FAPSI, and the Presidential Security Service.[15] Kolesnikov's concern was indicative of a much larger battle for influence over money, missions, contacts, and patronage within the upper reaches of political power.

In January 1995, reports emerged stating that command-and-control restructuring of the armed forces envisioned removing the General Staff from the Defense Ministry and subordinating it to the president's Security Council. Reportedly, Kolesnikov opposes this idea. He prefers that the General Staff coordinate the armed forces in crisis situations, remain subordinate to the defense minister, and occupy a seat on the Security Council, thereby retaining the right to report personally to the president. (Under such a plan, Kolesnikov would coordinate the activities of FAPSI, MVD, the border troops, and the Defense, Counterintelligence, and Emergency Situations Ministries.)[16]

All of this indicates that Yeltsin's—and Grachev's—"reforms" have advanced only at the price of fractionalizing the Russian armed services, dividing loyalties, confusing command and control, and creating widespread bitterness over the dispersion of power and money.

[13] "Kremlin Elite Army Unit Rumored," FBIS, *CEura*, Sept. 6, 1994, pp. 2–3, from *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Aug. 30, 1994.

[14] "Elite Units Moved," FBIS, *CEura*, Sept. 15, 1994, pp. 20–21.

[15] Alexander Rahr, "Five Armies," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, May 25, 1994.

[16] "Army Reform Scenarios Reviewed," FBIS, *CEura*, Jan. 18, 1995, p. 19, from *Kommersant-Daily*, Jan. 17, 1995.

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Military Districts or Regional Warlords?

In late 1994, Lieutenant General Aleksandr Lebed, then commander of the 14th Army, was quoted as saying:

> Theoretically we are under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief of Ground Forces in Moscow. In practice, we make decisions here. Don't touch me, or the families of my officers, and I'll do nothing to you. Touch me, and I'll hit you—hard.[17]

The old military administrative division of the USSR into sixteen districts did not disappear during the current transition period. Authorities reconfigured the military districts, making them fewer in number to conform with Russia's new borders. But their significance as centers of status, assets, and ties with local institutions and authorities did not diminish. In light of the growing resentment against the civil government and its parallel security forces, that means the military districts could emerge as local sources of opposition to the central government. The danger was stated most clearly by Dmitri Kholodov, *Komsomolskaya pravda*'s military correspondent:

> A frightening process has begun in the army. District commanders no longer rely on their ministry [but instead] turn to local authorities directly for help. In this way, the army is becoming tied to regions, something that, in the event of a crisis, could break it up into component parts.[18]

Using the example of the Siberian Military District, one officer spoke of a group called "Siberian Agreement" that tied together the governor and eight regional leaders to support the military district since the Defense Ministry purportedly was unable to provide enough assistance to the district commander.[19] Opposition political groups are attempting to exploit these growing divisions between Moscow and the regional districts by establishing cells in certain districts and enticing commanders to support their parties. For example, a representative of the Russian National Council (RNC), Aleksandr Sterlingov, visited the Far East Military District in December to "foster the provincials' patriotism and set up a few regional chapters of the organization." Sterlingov, a former KGB general, reportedly advised Defense Minister Grachev to watch his subordinates more closely, maliciously adding that the idea of setting up RNC chapters at the district units originated with a district commander. He denied requests to name specific individuals.[20]

The loyalty of commanders of military districts is crucial for Russia. During the Soviet era, district commanders met with local civilian officials in

[17] Lieutenant General Aleksandr Lebed quoted in Major General Edward B. Atkenson, "The Russian Armed Forces in Crisis," *Army*, Nov. 1994, p. 10.

[18] "Imminent Collapse of Armed Forces Predicted," JPRS, *MA*, Apr. 27, 1994, p. 2, from *Moskovskiy komsomolets*, Mar. 22, 1994.

[19] Author's discussion with a Russian officer, Moscow, Feb. 1995.

[20] "National Council Sets Up Far East Units," FBIS, *CEura*, Dec. 12, 1994, p. 27, from *Segodnya*, Dec. 9, 1994.

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what amounted to district military collegiums, and these military and civilian officials coordinated their efforts to provide mutual support. Soldiers aided the local economy by helping with the harvest, and civilian officials supplied the military with products and materials they could not get on a timely basis through military procurement channels.

The extent of a military district's influence and power was defined by Colonel General Viktor Andreyevich Kopylov, commander of troops of the Siberian Military District, in a newspaper interview. His district represents an operational-strategic formation with vital defense missions for Russia. His district area contains 42 percent of all enterprises of the Russian military-industrial complex, and it has troops deployed in the oblasts of Omsk, Novosibirsk, Tomsk, and Kemerovo; the krays of Krasnoyarsk and Altay; and the republics of Tuva, Khakass, and Altay.[21] These assets would enable Kopylov to act independently and cripple Russia in a crisis. His operational-strategic formation alone would represent a formidable force. Hence, the stability and loyalty of such districts are of paramount interest for the survival of the Russian federation.

Opposition groups are exploiting divisions between Moscow and the military districts.

Defense Minister Grachev recently proposed a restructured Moscow Military District. He wants to make it an elite among military districts by dint of troops and status. Autonomy presupposes that the district will exercise its own command and control of troops, provide its own communications and rear services support, and have its own paymaster for officers and enlisted men.[22] The pay issue alone could create tendencies toward autonomy within other envious military districts.

Talk of autonomy in the military districts was matched by tough talk on the part of some commanders who openly resented political or even High Command interference in their affairs. The officer who best walked (and sometimes crossed) the border between military matters and Russian internal politics was Lieutenant General Aleksander Lebed, former commander of the Russian 14th Army, who resigned in June 1995. He boasted that he "never served the president [Yeltsin] and was not about to serve him." His sole loyalty was to "the fatherland," and in his view, nonparticipation of the military in politics was a "questionable formula" since it was impossible for generals to avoid involvement in politics. Lebed also praised the regime of Chile's former military ruler, Augusto Pinochet, noting that only a strong army could maintain stability in Russia and ensure its integrity.[23]

[21] Interview with Colonel General Viktor Andreyevich Kopylov, "Region's Colonel-General Interviewed," Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *FBIS Report: Central Eurasia*, Nov. 15, 1994, p. 76, from *Vechernyy novosibirsk*, Nov. 1, 1994.

[22] "Grachev Trip Linked to Military District," FBIS, *CEura*, Sept. 16, 1994, pp. 28–29, from commentary by Sergey Ovsiyenko, "'Arbat Military District' May Become Autonomous," *Rossiyskiye vesti*, Sept. 16, 1994.

[23] Stephen Foye, "Lebed Praises Pinochet, Calls for Strong Army," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, July 21, 1994.

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Among the military and public, support grew in 1994 for Lebed's becoming defense minister or even president. An opinion poll, leaked by Lebed's command, yielded the following results among 1,867 respondents in the Moscow area:

> Eighty-four percent advocated a shakeup of the Russian Defense Ministry's senior staff.
>
> Seventy-six percent favored Lebed for the post of defense minister.
>
> Nineteen percent favored Deputy Defense Minister Boris Gromov for the same post.
>
> Three and one-half percent favored current Chief of the General Staff Mikhail Kolesnikov for the post of defense minister. [24]

Clearly, if these results are correct, Lebed could become a political force in the near term. Perhaps this is why Yeltsin and Grachev timidly acquiesced to Lebed's demands despite his insolent behavior. Or perhaps Lebed simply had too much "dirt" on Grachev for Grachev to expel him. In any event, Lebed clearly approached warlord status before he offered his resignation. Now he may harbor higher ambitions.

Drop in Overall Readiness

Grachev and other officials vociferously defended proposals for a greater piece of the country's budget in 1994. Deputy Defense Minister Andrei Kokoshin noted that the 37 trillion rubles Parliament recommended, less than half of the Defense Ministry's 80 trillion ruble request, would force the military to demobilize nearly four hundred thousand soldiers, would cause deep social unrest in the army, would limit plans to recruit more contract volunteers, and could also cause the closing of more than three thousand defense plants, ruining both the defense capability and defense industry of the nation.[25]

Parliament did not agree with Kokoshin. In May it gave its preliminary approval of a much-reduced military budget. Yegor Gaydar of Russia's Choice, a former close associate of Yeltsin, noted that the 37 trillion rubles represented 6 percent of the country's GNP (while 80 trillion rubles represented 12 percent of the GNP), and this 6 percent matched the amount spent by most other nations in the world.[26] Of course, since May, the ruble has fallen in value and

[24] Vladimir Socor, "Lebed Aiming High," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, July 6, 1994.

[25] Stephen Foye, "Defense Ministry Criticizes Proposed Budget Cuts," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, Mar. 11, 1994.

[26] Keith Bush, "Gaydar on Defense Cuts," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, May 30, 1994.

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a war has broken out in Chechnya, both factors requiring many more rubles for the defense budget.

In light of the lack of funds, Russia is having more and more trouble simply finding young men willing to serve. The armed forces offer low pay and few benefits. When one considers that officers and their families are living in tents without heat, one can imagine the squalid conditions for the rest of the force. Social protection, pay, and educational benefits are lacking. Another deterrent is the high death rate among servicemen. One report noted that nearly twenty-five to thirty servicemen die daily from training accidents, suicides, or simply hazing.[27] Thus, young Russians have few incentives to join the service today.

The draft problem was so serious by autumn 1993 that the military had to establish a second, supplemental phase to the draft period. There were a reported seventy thousand draft dodgers in 1993.[28] The chief of the General Staff, Colonel General Mikhail Kolesnikov, noted in late January that only 54 percent of the enlisted ranks were manned and that only 20 percent of those eligible for the draft now serve. The military hopes to sign up an additional 150,000 under volunteer contracts to cover the shortfall.[29] Ground Forces commander Vladimir Semenov stated in November 1994 that the Ground Forces were at 53 percent of required strength, and that the fall call-up produced only 9 percent of the recruits the forces needed. He said the quality of the recruits was weak, noting that 3 percent had only a fourth-grade education, 27 percent had not completed high school, 12 percent had never held a job, and 11 percent had health limitations.[30] By the end of 1994, the military had nearly four hundred thousand men, or 32 percent of the force, under contract.[31] This forced Yeltsin in April of 1995 to sign a decree that made changes to the Law on Military Obligation and Military Service.

These compounding crises finally brought open contempt for Grachev in 1994. The most stern, caustic, or pointed was offered by Colonel Serafim Yushkov, information director of the Headquarters for Coordinating Military Cooperation of the CIS. In response to Yeltsin's defense of Grachev on national television, Yushkov published an open letter to President Yeltsin about Grachev's performance. Yeltsin had said of Grachev: "This, perhaps, is one of the strongest ministers of defense in the last decade."[32] Yushkov, in reply, wrote that he had never heard a good word about the defense minister from a single serviceman; that instead he had heard only ridicule and aversion; that Parliament has the

[27] Stephen Foye, "Deaths in the Russian Army," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, June 14, 1994.

[28] Stephen Foye, "Defense Ministry Criticizes Proposed Budget Cuts," Mar. 11, 1994.

[29] John Lepingwell, "Kolesnikov on Military Draft," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, Jan. 21, 1994.

[30] Nikolai Plotnikov, "The Ground Forces as an Indicator," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Nov. 1, 1994, p. 3.

[31] Stephen Foye, "Manning the Russian Army: An Update," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, Mar. 9, 1994.

[32] "Yeltsin's Support for Grachev Criticized," FBIS, *CEura*, Nov. 22, 1994, pp. 4–6, from *Moskovskiy komsomolets*, Oct. 22, 1994.

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same attitude toward Grachev; and that not a single clean spot has been left on the defense minister's uniform or name. Yushkov closed his letter as follows:

> Either you—the supreme commander—do not know the real situation in the army. Or you, knowing the true worth of P. Grachev, are holding on to him in the hope that he will yet again be able to man the crews of a few tanks. Or he is very close to you in spirit, views, and conduct. All three options are deplorable for Russia, the army, and the officer corps.[33]

Grachev relieved Yushkov from his duties as a result of this letter.

The January 1995 letter from a Russian "Officer X," which appeared in *Time* magazine, accused Grachev of "surrounding himself with an entourage of loyal but dull military hacks . . . not fighting hard enough to defend the military budget, and . . . covering up corruption."[34] The "dull military hacks" received their positions based not on merit but by being political loyalists to Grachev, friends from his General Staff Academy circle, or compatriots from Afghanistan. Thus, officers accuse Grachev of instituting his own mafia group as the brain trust of the Defense Ministry.

Officers accuse Grachev of instituting his own mafia group as a brain trust.

The impact of an inadequate military budget, a draftee shortfall, Grachev's perceived incompetence by many officers, and reorganization of forces and missions had a predictable effect on readiness: it fell drastically. Writing in March 1994, military journalist Dmitri Kholodov noted that "seventy percent of all officers and warrant officers think their units are incapable of performing their missions. Up to 40,000 young officers leave the service each year."[35] In an attack on Grachev, Kholodov noted that even ideological control over the armed forces was lost, since Grachev did not revive the traditions of the Russian army as an ideological substitute for the communist ideology of former political officers. As a result, the newspaper *Zavtra*, an outlet for left-wing "patriots," has filled the vacuum for many officers, according to Kholodov.

At a November 1994 press conference, Colonel General Vladimir Semenov, commander in chief of the Ground Forces, said that military districts had begun using war-reserve stockpiles because they were unable to obtain funding for basic materials such as fuel. Many soldier support programs were suspended. Semenov noted that not a single division-scale exercise had been held during the past two years and that some armies and corps had no exercises above company level. Annual flying time for pilots was reduced by more than two-thirds, from one hundred to thirty hours, and 35 percent of all helicopters were grounded for a lack of repair parts.[36] In May, Semenov reported that the

[33] "Colonel Sends Open Letter," FBIS, *Ceura*, Oct. 24, 1994, pp. 19–20, from *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Oct. 22, 1994.

[34] "Letter from Officer X," p. 48.

[35] "Imminent Collapse of Armed Forces Predicted," JPRS, *MA*, Apr. 27, 1994, p. 1.

[36] Plotnikov, "The Ground Forces as an Indicator," p. 3.

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ground forces were short some seventeen thousand junior officers.[37] Later, he stated that nearly four thousand officers, many not even thirty years old, left the service in 1994 of their own accord. Lastly, research on units around Russia indicates that more than 40 percent of officers' and warrant officers' families are in constant debt or need, with more than 35 percent suffering delays of two months or more in receiving their pay. According to a recent Duma report, 130,000 military servicemen are without quarters, and only 78,000 apartments out of the planned 135,000 were built in 1993–94.[38]

The Chechen debacle was scarcely predictable. But in retrospect, it clearly exposed to the world—and not least to Russians themselves—the impact of the processes of decay noted above.

One eyewitness response to events in Chechnya came from a retired soldier who went to Grozny to assess the situation for himself. What he found shocked him, and he realized that the processes at work on the armed forces in the past two years had clearly ruined combat preparedness. First, he found it difficult to comprehend, after arriving at the Mozdok headquarters, how commanders planned to use so much armor, artillery, and aviation in a "peace-keeping operation." Secondly, he found it hard to understand that the troops believed no large-scale combat would ensue. The force seemed unaware of what lay before it:

> I was struck by the unconcern in units' and subunits' disposition areas. There was no notion of main and fall-back areas of deployment; there was no well-organized traffic control or regulating service. The engineering preparation of the area, security, restricted access, procedures for troop movement and motorized traffic, and the rear services resembled a disturbed beehive.[39]

But the ultimate victims may prove to be, not the Chechen or Russian soldiers, but Russian democracy and President Yeltsin.

The Military and Politics

Rightly or wrongly, the military rank and file fix the blame for their degradation on Grachev. Belying the pleasant myth of an apolitical, post-Soviet military, Officer X spoke for untold thousands of servicemen when he wrote, "Yeltsin has denied us our most precious professional feeling: a sense of pride in our own might. The military will never forgive him for that."[40]

[37] Stephen Foye, "Ground Forces Commander on Manning Problems, Other Issues," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, May 20, 1994.

[38] Duma Committee on Defense, *On the Financial Condition of the Armed Forces in 1994*, Mar. 1995 (mimeograph).

[39] "Officer Reports Visit to Chechnya with Advancing Forces," FBIS, *Ceura (supplement)*, Jan. 23, 1994, p. 39, from *Izvestiya*, Jan. 11, 1995.

[40] "Letter from Officer X," p. 49.

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The disappearance of the Communist political officers from military units created an ideological vacuum that has yet to be filled. Nor has the government developed a reliable constitutional mechanism to keep the military out of politics. This has resulted in some serving officers being elected as parliamentary officials and supporting various political groups. This is a dangerous fact, but one all politicians are attempting to exploit. In February, even Defense Minister Grachev noted that:

> Leaders of many parties and movements have been actively visiting me in the last few months. They are trying to get in contact, to prove to me that should they win the election, they would strive to restore a powerful, strong army in Russia. . . . All main leaders of parties and factions, except for the party of democrats headed by Yegor Gaydar, have already had meetings with me.[41]

To counter this development, Yeltsin has instructed Grachev to report any meetings with political groups to him immediately.[42]

Some take positions strongly at odds with Grachev. One major, a member of the ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party and the Duma's Defense Committee, stated that Russian peace-keepers wore a uniform of shame and had the blood of former countrymen on their hands. Another officer noted that slogans about the military remaining aloof from politics are nothing but populist declarations that do not reflect present-day reality.[43]

The same source reports that some fifty political organizations have military members, and several even have paramilitary structures. These latter structures, while small now, have the potential to grow in the near future. One, the Belaya Gvardiya (White Guard), intends to have the president see "orderly, cultured, decisive columns in black uniforms with the skull and crossbones, Kornilovian troops, Russian officers—and democrats who are willing to die in the name of reform."[44] It has links with the Democratic Union. Another paramilitary group is the Living Wheel Union. It aims to establish a national guard since, in its opinion, Russian society is breaking down. Co-chairman Viktor Maslyukov says the Wheel has strong roots in the Russian army, with colonels and generals on its coordinating council. A third group, Russian National Unity, under Aleksandr Barkashov, claims to have recruited professional soldiers, reserve officers, and former special-service employees. Their badge is a swastika crossed with two blades, and their goal is the military-patriotic education of youth in pursuit of social order and redistribution of wealth. It even considers itself a substitute for ineffectual, official law enforcement bodies and the army.[45]

[41] "Grachev Confident of Army's Multiparty Support at Elections," FBIS, *CEura*, Mar. 1, 1995, p. 25, from Moscow NTV, Feb. 28, 1995.

[42] "Source: Grachev Must Report Contacts to Yeltsin," FBIS, *CEura*, Apr. 24, 1995, p. 26, from *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Apr. 18, 1995.

[43] "Letter from Officer X," p. 49.

[44] The allusion is to Imperial Russian General Lavr Georgiyevich Kornilov, who tried to restore discipline in the tsarist army.

[45] "Program on Paramilitary Groupings," JPRS, *MA*, Aug. 10, 1994, pp. 1–3, from Moscow Ostankino TV, Aug. 6, 1994.

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Some organizations represent the social and legal protection of servicemen, while others advocate wholesale change in the military. The Independent Military Trade Union works closely with the Defense Ministry, the Ministry of Social Protection, the Federal Employment Service, and the Russian Union of Veterans of Afghanistan. The organization has primarily retrained discharged service members, helped obtain funds for the construction of housing, and developed a life insurance program for servicemen. It retains the ability to use its legislative initiatives to defend the professional, socioeconomic, and spiritual rights and interests of service members.[46] In many respects, this organization is starting to resemble the Association of the U.S. Army.

A second organization with the potential to cause trouble for the armed forces is the Officer's Union. Led by Lieutenant Colonel Stanislav Terekhov, who opposed Yeltsin in October 1993, the union advocates early presidential elections and joint action with other opposition forces, in particular the Communist Party. Another union leader is Colonel General Vladislav Achalov, who also opposed Yeltsin in October 1993 and, along with Terekhov, was imprisoned.[47] The union already has more than fifty regional organizations. In many cases the members of the regional councils are a part of the party and patriotic movement regional leadership. These structures will be controlled vertically by political organs and horizontally by subregional coordinating organs. Membership is reportedly on the rise.[48]

Many army leaders have little faith in democracy.

Equally troubling is the creation of the All-Russia Assembly of Officers, developed by the All-Army Officer Assembly in late February 1995. The speakers at the assembly noted that they did not rule out the possibility of using force to change the power base of the regime if the president or government violates the constitution. The newly elected leaders of the political organization are Vladislav Achalov and Stanislav Terekhov.

The military has remained adamant, as throughout its Soviet years, that civilian control is neither required nor reasonable from the viewpoint of professional competency. Military leaders stated that they already are under civilian control in many respects and further guidance is not required. Moreover, many army leaders are especially skittish about civilian control at this juncture because they have little confidence in democracy, which they associate with economic decline, political chaos, and military decay. Yet another worry is the influence exerted by corrupt politicians.[49] Many politicians are unhappy with this attitude. Colonel Sergei Yushenkov, the chairman of the State Duma's

[46] Interview with Captain 3rd Rank (Reserve) Mikhail Kolchev, "Development of Independent Military Trade Union," JPRS, *MA*, Apr. 27, 1994, pp. 5–6, from *Syn otechestva*, April 1994.

[47] "Officer's Union Collaborates with Communist Party," FBIS, *CEura*, Sept. 21, 1994, p. 47, from *Pravda*, Sept. 20, 1994.

[48] "The Provinces Demand Action," JPRS, *MA*, Jan. 31, 1995, p. 45, from *Politsiya*, Nov. 3, 1994.

[49] A. James Melnick, "Beyond the Economy: Internal Factors Affecting the Future of the Russian Military," *Naval War College Review*, Summer 1994, p. 50, footnote 64.

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Defense Committee, stated that the military is defining its own missions and objectives, formulating the defense budget, defending it before the government and the Federal Assembly, and implementing personnel policy. Therefore, the conversion of the Defense Ministry from a military to a genuinely civil structure has become an urgent task.[50]

The most difficult questions to answer are how many officers are aligning themselves with political parties, and with which parties are they affiliating? Some trends are now apparent. Vladimir Zhirinovsky, nationalist leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, warranted the attention of a humiliated, despised military and his antagonists after receiving a healthy percentage of the military's vote in the December 1993 elections. (Estimates range wildly from 25 percent to as high as 90 percent in some districts.) Zhirinovsky reported in November that he had formed a group of once-influential generals to help the Serbs fight in the former Yugoslavia. These men included former minister of defense Yazov, former Ground Forces chief Varennikov, former airborne forces commander Achalov, and the former editor of *Military Historical Journal*, General Viktor Filatov.[51]

Former defense minister Evgenii Shaposhnikov, still in uniform and Yeltsin's representative at the state company *Rosvooruzheniye* (Russian military equipment), is a deputy chairman of the Party of Social Democracy.[52] Grachev himself once reportedly addressed the conference of the People's Patriotic Party and supported its political manifesto.[53] Recently, a meeting was held in Moscow under the slogan "Soldiers in Arms, Unite!" The meeting was attended by Arkadii Volskii of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Enterprises, and included deputations from the Russian Union of Reserve Officers, the Generals and Admirals Club, the Foundation for the Adaptation and Defense of Servicemen and Soldiers of the Fatherland, the Association of Veterans of Intelligence (external), the Moscow Committee of Veterans of War, the Club of Veterans of the KGB, and the Moscow Patriarchate. Volskii stated that the duty of his union was to provide material support for soldiers and veterans in all regions of Russia.[54] The party associations of these key figures and clubs is especially important because of the large numbers of servicemen's votes they may command.[55]

[50] "Civilian Control of the Army," *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, Vol. XLVI, No. 44, 1994, p. 21, from *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, Nov. 1, 1994. Note: due to a printing error, Vol. XLVI, No. 44 was originally printed as Vol. XLVI, No. 43.

[51] "Zhirinovskiy: Increase Russian Battalion In Bosnia," FBIS, *CEura*, Nov. 28, 1994, p. 37, from INTERFAX (Moscow), Nov. 25, 1994.

[52] "Shaposhnikov Defies Grachev/Army Faces Down," FBIS, *CEura*, Sept. 30, 1994, p. 37, from *Komsomolskaya pravda*, Sept. 29, 1994.

[53] Ibid., p. 36.

[54] Boris Krotkov, "Warrior Brothers, Unite!" *Business World*, Feb. 23, 1995, p. 1.

[55] Stephen Foye, "Secret Zhirinovsky Meeting with Military Leaders?" *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty E-Mail Bulletin*, Jan. 28, 1994.

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Conclusions

On December 25, 1994, three years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian defense minister Grachev said: "Not a single other army in the world is in such a catastrophic state. I ask you to take this as a warning."[56]

For Grachev, the last year and a half has been filled with antagonism and doubt. His budget proposal was not approved, subordinate commanders openly challenged his competency, infighting over roles and missions among the security services was intense, journalists openly charged him with corruption and the death of a journalist, and overall military readiness plummeted. If not for the personal loyalty of President Yeltsin, which appeared to waver at times, Grachev's time as minister of defense would have expired long ago.

The battle for the military vote has started.

Two lines of military opinion have appeared from the fractionalization process: one official voice (that of the Defense Ministry) and countless unofficial ones. The latter, military individuals and groups, are the ones to watch, as they line up with political parties and individuals in coming months. Simultaneously, the five processes described above will continue to chip away at military cohesion. Fresh cracks have developed as a result of the intervention in Chechnya: divisions among those who served and those who did not serve, among those who fought and those who merely held rear service jobs, and between the army and MVD. New ones could appear over sensitive issues such as NATO's expansion, a move that would directly influence the shape and design of Moscow's defensive doctrine concept, and the military budget process.

What effect will these fractures have on the military's voting pattern in the forthcoming parliamentary and presidential elections? Apparently the battle for the military vote has already started. While Grachev has explicitly stated that "election campaigning in the army will still be strictly banned," he added that the Agrarian, Liberal Democrat, and Communist parties have lately shown special interest in the army.[57] Grachev added that as a person ("not as a minister") he supports Prime Minister Chernomyrdin's bloc and is for the concept of developing two centrist blocs.[58]

Grachev's thoughts aside, press releases are appearing on the army's likely voting pattern in the forthcoming Duma elections. The reports are sharply at odds with one another, suggesting fierce battles over issues, personalities, and the geopolitical place and role of Russia in today's world. For example, one radio report indicated that fewer soldiers will support Zhirinovsky this time, although he will likely lose fewer votes than some other past nominees who are running again. The report added that the Russian Communities Congress

[56] *New York Times*, Dec. 25, 1994.

[57] "Electioneering in Army 'Banned,'" FBIS, *CEura*, May 8, 1995, p. 32, from *Segodnya*, May 7, 1995.

[58] "Article Views Grachev's Remarks," FBIS, *CEura*, May 8, 1995, p. 33, from *Kommersant-Daily*, May 6, 1995.

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(RCC) can change the situation entirely if Yuri Skokov, who was elected chairman of the RCC, "makes a right move with Aleksandr Lebed."[59] Some papers call Lebed the most popular and charismatic man in the country.

A newspaper survey among members of the Moscow and Northern Caucasus Military Districts painted an entirely different picture. The poll among servicemen indicated that a marked shift had taken place in the attitudes of medium-level command personnel. They accept the new geopolitical realities of Russia and retain the highest degree of trust from society at large. Yet a majority also feels that the military will participate in politics in one form or another. Up to 41 percent of the respondents indicated that the armed forces will periodically become involved in politics, although most officers polled did not think Lebed would make a good leader. Zhirinovsky, former vice president Aleksandr Rutskoi, and former economics minister Yegor Gaydar were assessed negatively, while Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and Duma Speaker Ivan Rybkin were assessed indifferently to positively. What is most interesting:

> Practically all of those polled believe that none of the existing parties can count on significant popularity within the military environment. Including the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia]. However, some believe that the votes of service members may be attracted by the names of respected military [leaders].[60]

This latter poll was taken between December 1994 and March 1995, at the height of the Chechen campaign. Therefore, it is surprising to read that Lebed, who came out against the unpopular operation, and Chernomyrdin, who organized it, could have such radically different ratings among the military, especially since (according to one report) over 557 officers had refused to go to Chechnya.[61] However, Lebed's popularity reportedly fell as a result of his unwillingness to act on Chechnya and his statement that he would command troops in the region only to withdraw them. That position was not considered worthy of a military leader or statesman.[62]

Is there a common bond that could prevent the army from fracturing entirely? Several were suggested during recent discussions with Russian officers. One, potentially, is the social protection and well-being of the individual soldier. Cleavages between elite and non-elite forces could shrink rapidly if respectable pay scales were developed, better housing provided, and self-respect regained. Fewer servicemen, both officer and conscript alike, would then show an interest in participating in corruption or the black market. Strife among security services would dissipate as officers stopped fixating on the privileges and benefits of others, or jumping to other services themselves. As morale and prestige increased,

[59] "Army's Likely Voting Pattern in Duma Elections," FBIS, *CEura*, May 4, 1995, p. 7, from Moscow RIA, Apr. 24, 1995.

[60] "Possible Voting Preferences of Military Personnel Examined," JPRS, *MA*, May 2, 1995, pp. 1–2, from *Izvestiya*, Apr. 21, 1995.

[61] "Army Officers Dismissed for Refusal to Fight in Chechnya," FBIS, *CEura*, Apr. 10, 1995, p. 15, from Moscow NTV, Apr. 7, 1995.

[62] Golovkov and Leskov, "Top Guns," p. 53.

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marginal improvements in readiness would follow. Military districts would have less incentive to resist central control. Perhaps most important of all, anti-democratic political parties could not exploit military demoralization to the extent they do now.

The wages and benefits package needed to appease the armed forces will inevitably require increases in the military budget. It remains to be seen whether the Russian economy will be able to support such increases, but certainly the West should not view them with alarm. Reliable monitoring agencies under the control of the General Staff can insure that payroll and benefits money ends up in the right hands. Outside auditors from the Duma may even assist in the process, and the military can help by offering transparency in the movement of money to stabilize the force. Paradoxically, more defense spending may serve to make the Russian military a less, not more, threatening force, both within Russia and in the world at large.

Equally important, from a Western point of view, is the assurance of impartial, effective parliamentary control over the military. This, in turn, means that Parliament must strive to understand the plight of the military and not merely pay lip service to it. That is difficult because so many adherents to the old way of thinking still occupy key parliamentary seats, and because the Chechen war will diminish their trust in the democratic process.

The military, for its part, must yield some of its autonomy and trust the central civilian regime. That process, too, will be difficult, in light of the fractionalization of the services and loss of confidence in Grachev and the Yeltsin government. But in the absence of civil-military cooperation, Russia's latest "time of troubles" will drag on and worsen in unpredictable ways that can only do immense harm to the government and army alike.

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Economics of the Arab-Israeli Peace Process

by Jim Lederman

The last year and a half has brought exceptional change to that corner of the Middle East formerly known as the Levant, now less glamorously called the Eastern Mediterranean. Israel has signed two major agreements, one with Jordan and one with the Palestinians; has begun to normalize relations with Tunisia, Morocco, Qatar, Oman, and other Arab states; has freed itself de facto from the Arab embargo; and looks forward hopefully to successful peace negotiations with Syria and Lebanon.

Astonishingly, all this has happened absent the causes commonly associated with a war's end. There was no new conquest, no exhaustion on both sides (though to some extent the *intifada* did wear down Israelis and Palestinians alike). There was no singular upheaval—revolution, civil war, or key assassination—no cultural or religious rapprochement, and no grand, new political vision. No common, external enemy drove together old foes. Certainly no change occurred in the personal or intellectual chemistry between leaders: Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and King Hussein had talked to each other for years; Rabin and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) president Yassir Arafat still loathed each other as much as ever. Nor did any significant alterations take place in the domestic political structure of the various parties. And, lastly, no expectations of vast, new regional trade provided an impetus to peace; total intra–Middle East trade is only 5–7 percent of the area's combined gross national product (GNP) because economies in the area are in general competitive, not complementary.[1]

So, if none of the classical causes of peace has recently been present in the Arab-Israeli domain, where did all these changes come from? Four premises about political life can guide our search for an answer.

[1] This is a composite picture based on the author's interviews with several economic experts on the Middle East, including Jacob Frenkel, governor of the Bank of Israel, interviewed in Sept. 1994, and Stanley Fischer, deputy director of the International Monetary Fund, interviewed in July 1993. See also, *Jerusalem Post*, Sept. 16, 1994.

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First, major political and diplomatic events do not just happen—they invariably result from processes that have been underway for a while. As with an earthquake, or a volcano that erupts without warning, political change may surprise us although the underlying pressures have been building for a long time.

Secondly, the Middle East is probably the ultimate example of the law of unintended consequences in international relations. One of the best examples was the Israeli invasion of Lebanon led by Ariel Sharon in 1982. It was meant, primarily, to push the Palestinians out of Lebanon, but instead it let the Shiite genie out of the bottle.

Thirdly, the most likely causes of an event are often not the obvious ones. To modify the dictum of Sherlock Holmes: if you eliminate the likelihoods, whatever remains, however improbable, must be true.

The last premise is a variation of Newton's law of inertia, which states that an object at rest tends to remain so unless acted upon by an outside force. Inertia affects minds as well as bodies. When significant events occur, politicians, journalists, scholars, critics, and commentators tend to look in the same old places for explanations rather than seek out different, even though obvious, alternatives.

These principles can help us explain recent changes in the Middle East. Most analysts point to some combination of the following: the mutual exhaustion produced by the *intifada*; a change of heart by the PLO; the Israel Labor Party's rise; the marginalization of Arab radicalism with the end of the cold war and the Persian Gulf war; and the efforts of American diplomacy in the pre-September 1993 period. All of these factors, no doubt, have been important. But even taken together, they do not constitute an adequate explanation. Simple short-term economic necessity has been as crucial as any of the aforementioned factors.

Indeed, not only do economic factors go far toward explaining why those who have wished to make peace did so, economic factors also go far to explain the motives of those who have chosen not to make peace. Nothing in the Middle East is entirely one-sided, after all. Economics has worked as an accelerator for some parties and as a brake for others. For at least two of the parties—Jordan and the PLO—this was not the peace of the brave but the peace of the bankrupt. For Israel, too, a variety of economic considerations played an important role—if not the major one—in its decision-making processes. For two others actors—Syria and Hamas (Harakat al-Mu'aqam al-Islamiya or Islamic Resistance Movement)—the economic progress that peace can bring is a threat to their internal modus operandi and especially to their mechanisms of political and social control. Let us take up these five cases in turn.

The PLO's Plight

For more than two decades, the PLO had been largely dependent on a variety of handouts, in the form of services from international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for

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Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and in the form of direct handouts from the oil-rich Gulf states. When Arafat chose to side with Iraq during the 1990–91 Persian Gulf war, he was responding to the immediate demands of the Palestinian rank and file, which saw in Saddam Hussein a leader capable of thumbing his nose at anyone and everyone—especially Israel and the United States.

But, as so often happens in situations of this sort, Arafat was a casualty of the law of unintended consequences. We cannot tell how carefully or thoughtfully he weighed his options, but it is certainly clear that he miscalculated just how tenacious the Saudis, Kuwaitis, and other Gulf states would be in continuing to punish him for having supported Saddam Hussein. Arafat appears to have thought that, at the most, any disputes raised in the Gulf crisis would blow over within a year or two, as had so many of Arafat's fractious relations with Arab states in the past. This time they did not blow over.

Arafat understood what an economic basket case awaited him in Gaza.

The Gulf states' determination to punish Arafat did not stem from mere anger or other emotions. It also had to do with money. Arafat either did not foresee or did not appreciate the meaning of the large Saudi budget deficits that have occurred in recent years because of the fall in oil prices and the Saudi failure to limit expenditures in response.[2] By the time the Persian Gulf war ended, the Saudis and Kuwaitis simply did not have the money to give away as they had in the past. For Arafat, the issue then became whether to make a deal with Israel and try to find new sources of funding, or to let the PLO go bankrupt.

The deal that was struck in the clandestine meetings in Oslo between April and August, 1993, in which the PLO and Israel reached an agreement on the draft accord, was therefore less the result of some new vision on Arafat's part and more the result of organizational necessity. As potential Western donors patiently explained, free handouts would not be given to the PLO, only to a political entity engaged in a constructive political process with Israel.[3] In other words, in order to save Fatah, the party, and the PLO as an organization, Arafat had little choice but to alter his long-standing policies, a shift hinted at in 1988 but never fully delivered thereafter.

One part of the bargain Arafat agreed to was that he had to accept Gaza as his base and first experiment in governance. This was not an easy decision, for Arafat understood full well what an economic basket case awaited him in Gaza. But, ultimately, he had no alternative. The fate of every political body he had built over more than two decades was at stake. So Arafat left the colorful world of liberation movements for the nitty-gritty world of governance, where different rules apply. That was an enormous change for him because

[2] Saudi Arabia's current financial problems have been reported extensively. See, for example, Mordechai Abir, *Saudi Arabia, Government, Society, and the Gulf Crisis* (New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 98–99; *The Economist*, Mar. 18, 1995.

[3] Author's off-the-record conversations with senior Western diplomats.

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leading an organization and leading a formal political entity are very different jobs. Arafat lacked both vision and administrative competence, and, not surprisingly, hit the ground stumbling and bumbling.

Arafat seems to have had no idea what would be required of him. He had almost a year, from the time of the Oslo agreements until he came to Gaza in July 1994, to prepare at least a prototypical civil service. Yet he did not build one because he did not understand the need for it; and even had he understood the need, he did not know how to do it. Arafat was lucky to have many competent professionals negotiate the deal with Israel, but he did not have enough qualified individuals to run an entire system of local administration. Besides, Arafat has made life very hard for the competent technocrats he does have working for him; his instinct is to make all the decisions for the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) single-handedly. Moreover, there was suddenly more to administer than Arafat had thought there would be.

Arafat had not anticipated the demands of donors for accountability and transparency in bookkeeping. To judge by his behavior in recent months, he expected to get money from Western donors just as he had gotten it in the past from the Saudis and from the Gulf states—without having to account for how it was spent. Ever since the summer of 1994, therefore, the World Bank and the donor nations have been trying to nudge him towards reality, but the process is a slow one. Despite a written accord reached on April 26 between the PNA, Israel, and the donor states, more trouble doubtless lies ahead. Arafat still dreams of great capital-intensive projects, such as a seaport and an airport in Gaza; meanwhile, sewage continues to run through open ducts in the streets.

In order to understand the "cost" of the PLO's takeover, look at the situation in both Gaza and the West Bank as it has evolved in recent months. These two areas have a total gross domestic product (GDP) of approximately $1–2 billion per year. It was clearly higher prior to the *intifada*, but the scale of economic activity is now difficult to judge with precision because of strikes, closures, and curfews. According to the best guesstimates, GDP per capita on the West Bank is approximately $1230 per year. In Gaza, the figure before the *intifada* was about $1100. By the time Arafat arrived in Gaza in July 1994, it was about $840; and by the time of the November 29, 1994, meeting of the donor groups in Brussels—after Arafat had been in Gaza for almost six months—the Gazan GDP had dropped to between $510 and $550.[4] In other words, Gaza was no longer part of the Third World—it was part of the Fourth World.[5]

[4] Figures for the period prior to Arafat's arrival are from the Israeli Civil Administration. The figure for the income prior to the November meeting was extrapolated from a statement by Terje Larsen, special coordinator of the U.N. secretary-general in the Occupied Territories, who told reporters on the eve of the November conference that "incomes had dropped by half." Currently, unemployment in Gaza is estimated by the Israeli Civil Administration to be in excess of 50 percent. This figure is confirmed by officials in the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR) and UNRWA.

[5] The Fourth World is most easily defined as an area of impoverishment in which even subsistence agriculture is impossible for a majority of the residents.

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The effects of the *intifada* were severe. A 1992 Hebrew University study showed a need to create 8–10 thousand jobs per year just to maintain then current levels of unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza. But because of the *intifada* more than seventy thousand Palestinian jobs in Israel have been lost. At the same time, the *intifada* created a birth explosion because of curfews, early marriages by families in need of bride prices, and other economic factors. As a result, about 25 percent of the population of Gaza is now under the age of five. The most optimistic Palestinian experts believe that it will take at least a decade to make up the current shortfall in jobs—and that projection does not include the baby boomers who will be entering the job market when those ten years draw to an end.[6]

The battle for primacy in the PNA councils is creating policy-making gridlock.

Because of the inability of Arafat's administration to draw up reasoned and reasonable economic proposals, the PNA last year received only $275 million out of the $720 million that had been pledged. Since $200 million went to day-to-day expenses, only $75 million was left for development—just slightly more than had been invested in the area prior to the Oslo accords.[7] The shortfall was not just the result of arguments with donors over accountability. Part of the problem lay in Arafat's own ambivalence when he took the reins of government. He had made his agreement with Israel to get money to save the PLO. His intent was to use whatever monies he could to strengthen his organizational base, which explains why some of those monies have been transferred to Tunis and to loyalists in Lebanon.[8] The donors, however, have been looking to him to use their funds, not only for the physical infrastructure of his jurisdiction, but also to build a permanent, stable system of governance and an economy that works. The issue remains unresolved.

Even within the councils of the PNA, the central debate remains the issue of how and to whom to distribute funds. Some, such as Ahmed Qurei (whose nom de guerre is Abu Ala), have allied themselves with the local leadership and basically agree with the Western donors' point of view. But some, such as Treasury Minister Mohammed Nashashibi and many of his allies in the former Tunis-based leadership, make the survival of the PLO as a political entity their primary concern.

The battle for primacy between these two camps is creating a policy-making gridlock. As the debate heightens, each camp seeks allies. The supporters of the former Tunis-based PLO hierarchy have succeeded in bringing on board U.N. organizations such as UNRWA and the United Nations Development

[6] "Palestinian-Israeli-Jordanian Labor Mobility: The Current Situation and Issues for a Peaceful Future," in *Securing Peace in the Middle East: Project on Economic Transition*, ed. Stanley Fischer and Thomas Schelling (Cambridge, Mass.: The Institute for Social and Economic Policy in the Middle East at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, 1993); Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel; author's interviews with officials from PECDAR .

[7] Peace Watch, "The Financial Condition of the Palestinian Authority," Jerusalem, Mar. 21, 1995.

[8] Ibid.

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Program, and independent NGOs who view the alleviation of poverty as the primary, immediate objective. U.N. personnel in particular argue that their well-organized and well-oiled bureaucracy can act in place of a proper local civil service. On the other side, the proponents of democracy and local government, including most of the bureaucrats in the newly formed Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR), support the basic position of the United States and the World Bank, which is that poverty can be eliminated only following the establishment of an independent but accountable civil service.

Now, one of the things that we know from experience is that donors usually give money for their own benefit. In most cases, between 50 and 80 percent of the designated money remains in the donor countries to pay for supplies and salaries.[9] For example, when Arafat's police force moved into Gaza, it came equipped with donor goods such as Mercedes-Benz trucks and GMC pickups. Even the Norwegians—among the people most sensitive to the plight of the Palestinians—sent them ten thousand uniforms from Norway, rather than having the uniforms sewn in Gaza where the money would have recirculated.

Arafat also expected easy money from Palestinian expatriates. But he has not gotten it because, while some people may be willing to donate to charity, businessmen want to be able to manage their own investments. Moreover, the commercial law in Gaza and the West Bank is inadequate and antiquated, and the lack of an overall coherent economic approach by the PNA frightens away large-scale, long-term outside investment. Businessmen—whether Palestinian, Arab, European, Japanese, or American—are not going to put up their money unless they know what the rules of the games are and what kinds of policies the government is going to advance.

This situation is not unique to the Palestinians, of course. The same thing has happened with expatriate Lebanese, Greeks, and Turks. If they cannot do business, they are not likely to go beyond modest contributions to village charities. A 1994 study done in Israel—a country that has engaged in huge fund-raising efforts over a long period of time—presaged the problems Arafat would face in recruiting private capital. Analyzing the impact that foreign funds have had on Israel, the study showed that over a twenty-year period (a period that included such monumental events as the 1967 Six-Day War), Jewish donations amounted to only about 10 percent of capital growth per year—not 10 percent of the total available capital.[10]

What is more, expatriate Palestinian investment has done more harm than good because it has been limited largely to the purchase of real estate. As a result, land prices have been driven sky-high, depriving local residents of the opportunity to buy land and build homes. Recently, for example, a one

[9] Author's off-the-record conversations with aid officials from Western and U.N. agencies.

[10] Ephraim Kleiman, unpublished paper (presented at the meeting of the Oxford University/EU Working Group on Impediments to Investment in the Middle East, Oxford, England, June 25, 1994).

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dunam (quarter acre) plot in central Ramallah went for $8 million, something on the order of ten times its pre-1994 price.[11]

Some of these problems could have been mitigated by a proper system of tax collection. But Arafat was not willing to enter into a direct confrontation with his constituents over this issue—indeed, he has declared something of a general tax holiday to help win over the population. As a result, the PNA was able to raise only $6 million per month from levies, instead of the $17 million Israel had raised in the past. And most of the taxes collected—in the form of customs duties, value-added taxes, and excise duties—were collected by the Israelis or under Israeli tutelage in the West Bank.[12]

Since the PNA takeover in Gaza and Jericho, Palestinian officials have had to undergo very serious and often painful sessions in reality therapy. One example occurred at a closed-door meeting of Palestinian businessmen, PECDAR officials, and international economists held in Jerusalem in July. PECDAR officials, who had previously opposed a customs union with Israel because they believed that poverty-stricken Palestinians could not afford the relatively high Israeli levies on consumption, announced that they were still opposed, but were totally reversing their underlying argument. Now, they said, they were against a customs union because, since they could not raise sufficient government revenues from income taxes, they needed higher customs duties and other consumption taxes than those applied in Israel in order to cover the revenue shortfall.

Policies adopted by the PNA make plain Arafat's inability to understand small-business entrepreneurship. In other words, neither he nor his immediate entourage knows what policies are needed in order to allow and encourage large numbers of people who are not already wealthy to make money. Among the most obvious elements are political stability, security, and agreed upon rules and regulations—all the things most people in business normally take for granted.

The underlying difficulty is that Arafat ultimately views financial control as a source of power and, because of that, wants the final say in every small decision. To that end, he has created three overlapping, competing finance and economics ministries for a very small place and a minuscule economy. He uses the multiplicity and overlap of functions as a means of political control in those areas he deems vital to the protection of his own position and interests.

Arafat has also sired six competing securities services for more or less the same reason: so that he can divide and rule. In other words, his operating logic is to let no one get single-handed or potentially independent control of military/security affairs or economic affairs lest his own power slip. Such centralization has reached the point of absurdity. For example, to get a telephone in Gaza today the applicant must obtain Arafat's personal signature.[13] Unsur-

[11] Author's interview with Samir Huleileh, PECDAR director of coordination for NGOs and U.N. agencies, Apr. 1995.

[12] Peace Watch, "An Update on the Financial Condition of the Palestinian Authority on the Eve of the Donor Nation Conference in Paris," Jerusalem, Apr. 27, 1995.

[13] Author's recent interviews with Gaza residents.

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prisingly, then, in the contest for influence between his long-time cronies in Tunis and the new bureaucracy represented by PECDAR, Arafat has come down firmly on the side of the former. It has been apparent for months that much of his effort has been directed toward hobbling PECDAR and making end-runs around the World Bank and its Palestinian supporters.

This matters because a failure to create an environment of trust and basic competence can lead to a total collapse of investment and the capacity to acquire donor money. Delays are one thing; the withdrawal of pledges is something else. Since money, or the lack of it, was what drove Arafat to make a deal with Israel in the first place, the absence of a proper and inviting financial atmosphere that will draw in funds can have a significant impact on the future of the entire peace process.

The Jordanian Problem

The Jordanian regime lived in a condition of de facto non-belligerence with Israel for more than twenty years. So why, all of a sudden, should the two countries be interested in making formal peace? What was there to gain? While diplomatic and security factors are not to be dismissed, here, too, money mattered a great deal.

When King Hussein announced that he was going to make peace with Israel, he faced substantial opposition. While the Bedouin sheiks and the army—the institutional mainstays of the regime—supported him, Islamists, intellectuals, and members of the Palestinian-dominated professional organizations all came out in open opposition to the deal. The king nonetheless chose to go ahead.

He, too, had been tarnished by supporting Saddam Hussein and was not getting the financial support from the Gulf states that he had received in the past. The king also had to cope with up to three hundred thousand refugees returning from the Gulf, especially those who were kicked out of Kuwait. He had a foreign debt of $8.5 billion, with a GNP of $4 to 5 billion.[14] The Jordanian economy also lost the remittances of all who had been working in the Gulf, an important source of foreign income. U.N. sanctions against Iraq severely restricted the overland transfer of goods from Aqaba to Iraq, which had been one of Jordan's major businesses since the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980. And tourism had almost completely died.

In the two years after the Persian Gulf war, however, Jordan's economy grew relatively rapidly, largely because of the arriving refugees. So things looked good on paper. Growth was about 11 percent in 1992 and 5.5 percent in 1993.[15] But this growth was directed mainly toward construction and imported household

[14] Statistics from the Bank of Jordan and background documents circulated during the Club of Paris meeting, Paris, June 1994.

[15] Author's interviews with Jordanian government officials, Nov. 1994.

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necessities. Little was directed toward job creation or exports. And there was no sign on the horizon of major growth in foreign currency earnings.

No less important in the king's thinking were the extent and future economic consequences of the deal between Israel and the PLO. Following that deal, the dollar-denominated foreign currency reserves at the Bank of Jordan fell—from $600 million to $200 million—in a matter of weeks.[16] In other words, there was a run on the Jordanian dinar. One major reason was that, throughout the Israeli occupation, the Jordanian dinar had been the major currency used in the occupied areas. Most rent contracts, for example, were denominated in dinars. Most business dealings were done in dinars. When the agreement between Israel and the PLO was signed, the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories began to wonder what was going to happen, and because of this uncertainty, many began to cash in dinars for dollars.

Another significant element for Jordan was that King Hussein, and especially his brother, Crown Prince Hassan, who has taken the management of the economy under his wing, understood the need to break the stranglehold of large, vested interests in order to get the economy moving again. Thus, the value of the dinar has dropped from $3.03 per dinar in 1987 to about $1.40 today, and most of Jordan's economic efforts from 1988 onwards have been directed at bolstering the dinar—efforts which include high tariffs, import substitution, and other protectionist measures. Such policies strengthened families with accumulated capital and left little room for small entrepreneurs to establish themselves and prosper. The crown prince came to understand that there was a need to reopen the Jordanian economy, especially after the sanctions applied in the wake of the Persian Gulf war.

Then, too, Jordan is currently suffering from approximately 30 percent unemployment—and a larger amount of underemployment.[17] In this context, many Jordanians see Israel as both a market for Jordanian goods, because of Jordan's lower wage rates, and as a possible source of jobs. Israel allows about 42,000–45,000 Romanians and Thais to work in the country, mainly in construction and agriculture.[18] Why should the Jordanians not have those jobs? Many of the jobs have been lost by the Gazan and West Bank Palestinians, but Jordanians seem quite happy to take up where the Palestinians left off.

In other words, a major part of what Jordan seems to have been looking for in an agreement with Israel was a restructuring of its own economy. The peace agreement provided a vehicle for this. In June of last year, for example, as a kind of hors d'oeuvre, the Club of Paris restructured $1.5 billion worth of Jordanian debt. And then the United States promised that if Hussein struck a deal with Israel, Washington would forgive $770 million.[19]

[16] *Ha'aretz*, July 25, 1994.
[17] Author's interviews with Jordanian government officials, Nov. 1994.
[18] Author's interview with Hannan Rubin, spokesman, Ministry of Labor, Israel, Mar. 1995.
[19] "Israel/Jordanian Economic Incentives," *Oxford Analytica Daily Brief IV*, Sept. 14, 1994, pp. 10–12.

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All the economic considerations that led Hussein to press forward with the peace process seem obvious and straightforward. But economic theory sometimes gets in the way. Hussein courted three main groups of constituents from November 3, 1993, when he met secretly with Israel minister of foreign affairs Shimon Peres, to the signing of the final draft treaty with Israel in July 1994. The first group was the Bedouin sheiks, who always supported him and who were the basis of his political constituency. To them he was able to promise the possibility of resolving what the Bedouins view as "the Palestinian problem." The majority of Jordanian nationals on the East Bank are Palestinians, and most East Bank Bedouins would like to change that majority to a minority. If there were peace agreements covering Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinians, Hussein argued, many Palestinians would go back to places—like Jericho, Nablus, Jenin, and Ramallah—from which they fled in 1967.

Jordan currently suffers from approximately 30 percent unemployment.

The second group from whom Hussein needed ironclad support was the army. To his generals he could promise the arrival of much U.S. surplus equipment, available in Europe as a result of the end of the cold war. Moreover, as part of the peace agreement, Israel dropped its opposition to Washington's sale of F-16s to Jordan.

The third group, landowners living along the Jordan River, was more difficult to satisfy. One of the things that the United States had been trying to do for years, in the episodic negotiations over water rights in the Jordan Valley basin, was to encourage both sides to raise water prices to market levels in order to prevent waste. Apparently, some U.S. officials in the Middle East tried to persuade the two sides to discuss water pricing in the context of the peace agreement. Jordan refused, however, and Israel supported Jordan because Hussein needed the support of the landed families in the Jordan Valley. Whereas those families pay slightly less than 1 cent per cubic meter of water, that same water sells in Amman for 32 cents and in Jerusalem for $1.20. So the king essentially bought off these farmers, who are critical constituents. Because they are spread out along the Jordan River, they also are part of the early-warning system against terrorism and cross-border infiltration. It was essential for Hussein to keep their support.

However, despite all the strenuous efforts of the Hashemite court to press forward, it is running into serious obstacles being created by the very bureaucracy it established to protect the previous status quo. The bloated bureaucracy has been fighting for its collective life. It fears that any change will bring about greater efficiency and a loss of jobs. Of even greater importance is that the myriad of regulations thrown up to protect the dinar and local industries gave senior officials unprecedented power. Only they could hand out one-time exemptions to the rules. And any local or foreign investor had to pay them total obeisance. The loosening of their reins of control brought on by the economic liberalization expected as part of the peace process is seen by them as a serious threat. And for that reason, they have used almost every bureaucratic method available to delay the implementation of the free trade

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agreements with Israel and the PNA. For example, on the day after Jordan signed a free trade agreement with the Palestinians, sixty-two Palestinian trucks laden with citrus that crossed the Jordanian border were shunted off by Jordanian officials into a parking lot under the hot sun. Only after the fruit rotted were the trucks released. No explanation for the action was offered.

Since the signing of the peace treaty on October 26, 1994, the Jordanian normalization policy has grown out of the initial gamble to strike a deal with Israel. Hussein's policy is to expand Jordan's economic horizons and to bring large-business interests on board as a counterweight to the Islamists and the anti-peace secularists, both Palestinian and Jordanian. In other words, Hussein is trying to put a fourth leg on the stool of his peace constituency. Unlike the Egyptians and Palestinians, the Jordanians are trying hard to press forward with trade and other economic issues. They come to their meetings with the Israelis well-prepared, replete with background papers, with strong governmental backing, and with a keen readiness to do business. As regards economics, the only complaint coming from the Jordanian side is that things are moving too slowly—quite a contrast with the Egyptian-Israeli relationship as it developed after March 1979.

Israel

Following the Persian Gulf war, the coordinator of activities in the Occupied Territories, Major General Danny Rothschild, suggested that the *intifada* would continue so long as Israel continued to use only sticks in trying to combat it. Israel, he said, needed carrots too. The carrot that he proposed was rapid economic development, especially in Gaza. When the Israeli Labor government came to power in the June 1992 election, Rabin, who had been the author of the heavy-stick policy, adopted Rothschild's basic approach. After years of government-sanctioned and -enforced mercantilism, the Israeli authorities finally understood and accepted that it was in Israel's interest that the Palestinians do well. Only when the Palestinians had something to lose, it was argued, would the masses reject terrorism as a way to fight the occupation, and even assist in the control of terrorist organizations.

But that is not the only reason why Israel pressed ahead. No less important, Israel is now transforming from a developing to a developed country. Last year, for example, Israel spent more than 3 percent of its GNP on research and development—more than any country in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).[20] This gamble, however, required outside investment and markets. Without a move toward peace, enormous markets, such as those of India and China, would probably have remained closed.

[20] The OECD comprises all the countries of Western Europe, plus the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

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More specifically, because of its small domestic economy and two decades of slow but steady economic liberalization, Israel has tended to develop "niche" products. The key to successful marketing of these products lies in worldwide markets. Israel must utilize this strategy because, unlike countries with large domestic populations, Israel lacks a sufficiently large consumer base of its own.

So far, initial Israeli government perceptions have proven to be correct. Since March, there has been a significant drop in the number of terrorist incidents instigated against Israelis by Hamas. This has been due, in part, to a more aggressive position by Arafat towards Islamist extremists. But no less importantly, Gazans report that Hamas has begun to run into considerable opposition from ordinary Palestinians who want more jobs in Israel and fear that any upsurge in terrorism will bring with it an even greater drop in the standard of living in Gaza. In addition, after two years of hard bargaining, in July, Israel and the European Union (EU) completed negotiations on a revised free trade pact that will afford Israel considerable economic advantages, including membership in the council that distributes money for European research and development projects.

In addition, Israeli managers have concluded that they are poor marketers, largely due to cultural differences between themselves and other nations. They therefore feel the need for overseas strategic partners with know-how and muscle in local markets. However, strategic partners were hard to find so long as the Middle East was viewed as inherently unstable. In the late 1980s this issue became particularly acute because of Israel's mounting trade deficit, especially with Europe. Last year, the overall trade deficit was $8.3 billion. The trade deficit with Europe is particularly irksome. Israel imports about $11.5 billion from Europe as a whole but exports only $5 billion. In the early 1980s, Israel could cover 75 percent of its imports with exports to the EU countries. Today, it can cover only 37 percent—a massive drop.[21]

As a result, Israel very much wanted a new trade agreement with the EU that would lower tariffs and create a freer market for financial services and textile and agricultural products. It particularly desired looser rules of origin, such as those that had been granted to Austria and Sweden. For example, if Israel imported a microchip from Taiwan to make a product in Israel, it wanted the entire product to be considered Israeli and therefore subject to lower tariffs. Israel wanted to become a partner in European research and development projects and sought freer access to public procurement tenders in the member states of the EU. (A tender is a written offer to contract goods or services at a specified cost or rate.) The EU responded by negotiatiating a new trade deal contingent on Israel's pressing forward with the peace process.

So, Israeli economic considerations in peace were two-fold: self-interest was involved both in dealing with the threat of Palestinian unrest and in concern

[21] Author's interview with Zvi Tenney, head of the economics desk, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel, Sept. 1994.

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over the future of the Israeli economy. Were these considerations as important as basic security issues? Probably not, but they have been more significant within the Israeli decision-making process than most analysts have recognized. In addition, they have become integral to the strategic thinking of Israeli leaders such as Shimon Peres.

Syria

If economic development has played such a vital role in the prosecution of the Israeli peace process with Jordan and the Palestinians, why does it not work with some of the other protagonists? Why does it not work with Syria, for example, obviously the key to completing a comprehensive peace with Israel's immediate Arab neighbors?

By all measures, Syria is a special case. To begin with, the Syrians themselves do not seem to have a good idea of what is happening with the Syrian economy. If one wants to be generous, about the best one can say of official Syrian statistics is that they are incomplete. Several leading economic analysts of the Middle East have tried hard to understand the Syrian economy and have failed. For all the confusion, however, at least some significant trends can be discerned, and they have an important bearing on Syria's peace-process behavior.

First, Syria has a relatively buoyant economy. One U.S. assessment puts its per capita GDP at about $1,909 annually.[22] So, unlike Jordanians and Palestinians, Syrians feel little immediate economic pressure to deal with Israel. The current situation is a far cry from the late 1970s and early 1980s when Syrians had to stand in line for tea and sugar.

Of course, because of the highly disordered national accounting practices, nobody in Damascus can ring warning bells if something is in fact going wrong. Indeed, no clappers exist with which to ring the bells.

To give but one example of what this means in practice: any comparison of statistics based on figures denominated in Syrian pounds and statistics based on other currencies creates huge distortions. That is so because Syria has at least three different exchange rates: the official rate, the tourist rate, and what people call the neighboring countries' rate, which is based on the free-market value of the Syrian pound in Beirut and Amman. These rates range from eleven Syrian pounds per dollar to forty-four Syrian pounds per dollar—a difference of 400 percent.[23]

With that large a spread of nominal values, currency manipulation can be a wonderful business if the speculator has the requisite official protection or is an official himself. Those with access to the regime, or who are part of

[22] United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. "World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1991–92."

[23] From author's survey of Amman moneychangers, Nov. 1994.

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the regime, can make relatively quick and easy fortunes from such speculation—and they do.

But currency juggling is just part of the Alawite-controlled, black-market, parallel economy. This supranational enterprise creates huge profits for selected individuals, not only from currency manipulation, but also from bribes, smuggling, and participation in the narcotics trade in Lebanon. As best one can gather, all of these activities taken together account for between 20 and 30 percent of all monetary transfers in Syria today.[24]

Syria's official budget deficit for 1993 was about $360 million, which does not seem bad. But it is up from $81 million in 1992.[25] So, some evidence exists that the economy may be less strong than it first appears. However, as noted, the inherent weakness or strength of the economy is difficult to discern. Merchants have made a fine art out of exporting their savings to more friendly climes, and a great number of government transactions are not registered in the books. Probably the best example of this latter phenomenon is that after the Persian Gulf war, Saudi Arabia gave Syria a present of $2 billion for supporting the allied effort. But the Bank of Syria that year registered only $313 million in foreign aid.[26] What happened was that the $2 billion was funnelled into an extra-budgetary fund used for arms purchases. Out of sight, out of mind; and out of mind, out of public accountability.

Syria is an economic wonderland of fantasy and illusion.

Then there is the question of Syria's external debt. Remember, Jordan's crushing debt was one of the factors most influential in leading Amman to a deal with Israel. But Syria is an economic wonderland of fantasy and illusion. Officially, Syria's foreign debt is about $16.5 billion, but no one takes this figure seriously and no one knows the real numbers. After all, many past trade agreements, especially with the now-defunct Eastern bloc, were barter arrangements. For example, until recently the Russian debt had been paid in textiles and toothpaste. But now Moscow claims Syria owes it in excess of $10 billion, and the Russians are demanding hard currency because of their own cash-flow worries.

In theory, then, the Russians could play an active role in nudging Syria toward compromise. However, Russian financial concerns make this highly unlikely. One of the towering ironies of the current situation is that the arms given and sold to Damascus by the former Soviet Union were provided in order to create influence over Syria's behavior. Today, the very size of the Syrian debt and the penurious situation in which Russia finds itself creates leverage in the opposite direction. Moscow has to be nice to Syria, not tough on its former client state, if Russia is to get back some of its money. As a result,

[24] Author's conversations with economists on the Middle East; especially, interview (Oct. 1994) with Professor Eliyahu Kanovsky, then with the BESA Center for Strategic Studies, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan.

[25] Bank of Syria, statistical abstracts, 1992, 1993.

[26] "Syria/Economic Management," *Oxford Analytica Daily Brief V*, Nov. 8, 1994, pp. 10–11.

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the Russians more than anyone else are now pressing Washington to be accommodating to the Syrians.

Moscow's only remaining leverage with Damascus involves the renewal of maintenance contracts for the weapons sold to Syria in the past. But nowadays, the supply of spare parts, including even tank engines, is a less-effective policy tool with which to gain Russian leverage because the Chinese and the North Koreans are more than willing to supply whatever the Syrians request in return for less hard cash than the Russians demand.

Beyond the systematic disorder in national accounting practices and a lack of leverage by those nations to whom Syria owes considerable amounts of money, might there be any pro-peace economic incentives arising from domestic economic pressures? No. Following the 1991 passage of Law Number 10—designed to liberalize the economy for small entrepreneurs and encourage them to repatriate their foreign capital holdings—some hope arose that Syria was going to loosen up the economy, which a condition of peace would do everything to reward. But that loosening never came to pass. The bulk of the economy remains in government hands. About 70 percent of industry, 100 percent of banking, and 100 percent of oil production is still government-owned.[27]

The discovery of oil, in particular, is what has given the government its recent economic resiliency. Oil exports today provide about 70 percent of foreign currency earnings. But production is leveling off. Currently, the Syrians are pumping about 580,000 barrels per day, and production is expected to plateau at about 600,000 barrels per day.[28] So there is little room for new growth. And because of the growing Saudi external debt, aid monies to Syria from the Gulf have dropped drastically. Because of the growth in population—and because of the levelling-off in oil production—Syria may soon find that it needs new sources of foreign exchange. For the moment, however, no economic pressures deflect the Syrian regime from feeling strong and capable enough to play diplomatic hardball with the Israelis.

Moreover, while peace might aid the Syrian economy as a whole, it might not strengthen the economic levers that the regime uses to secure its own tenure. As part of any settlement with Syria, Israel would undoubtedly demand some sort of open trade and tourism agreement. That would have a major impact on the domestic scene in Syria. Again, economic policy in Syria is not just a means for growth or raising the standard of living. It is a tool—second only to outright military force—by which the regime maintains its power. If one looks at the distribution of incomes, for example, one sees that the gap in incomes between those connected to the higher reaches of the regime and those outside the ring of influence is extraordinarily large.[29] Agriculture, for example, is subject to very rigid price controls in order to keep the people in the cities happy. The Sunni peasants have little political clout.

[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.

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In addition, 31 percent of the working population is employed, in one form or another, by the government. When one includes dependents, about 6 million out of a total of 13.5 million people are reliant on government salaries.[30] So, on the one hand, Syria has a rural population thoroughly under the thumb of the government, and, on the other, an urban population that fears losing jobs. That is why there is little internal pressure for general change.

Thus, when we look at the large-scale political-economic situation in Syria, we see that peace, because of the trade it would bring and the economic openness it would promote, is on balance a threat to the Alawite regime. Unlike Jordan, which sees trade as a form of national salvation and political benefit, Syria views economic reform as a fundamental threat to the status quo. Unemployment is already approximately 20 percent, but it could be bumped up by 10 percent or more if efficiency measures were introduced in government offices and government corporations.[31] Trade would bring with it competition. That would lead to changes in the workplace. Rationalization in the workplace could create the domestic unrest that President Hafez al-Asad so much fears.

Nonetheless, Asad has pursued the appearance of participating in a peace process. He remains relatively isolated but understands his nation's and his regime's vulnerabilities. As a matter of basic strategy, therefore, participation in the peace process is not the product of a domestic or regional vision. It is an option that, for purposes of realpolitik, must be kept open—just in case something untoward happens.

The central theme in television coverage of Warren Christopher's ventures into the Middle East always centers on "Will Asad do it, or won't he?" But the real question, which remains unanswered, is "Can he do it, or can't he?" Unless Asad can find an alternative to his current use of the economy as an instrument for maintaining his regime, he will accept the Israelis' giving up the Golan Heights, but he cannot accept full economic relations with Israel or any other country as part of the price.

Hamas

Economic considerations also play a major role in the preparation of strategies and tactics within Islamic radical movements. It is difficult for many Westerners to comprehend, but even seemingly fanatical Islamic fundamentalists operate according to economic laws and with economic considerations in mind. Theirs is a system that is rational, logical, and workable within the framework of the region.

Exactly what is different and so enigmatic to outsiders? Just this: an objective of Western religious charities is to lift the standard of living of the people whom they serve. But the first principle of Hamas—as with most of

[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.

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the other extremist Islamic groups like Hizbollah, the Jama'a al-Islamiya in Egypt, and the competing groups in Algeria—is to drive down the standard of living, not raise it. These groups understand that attacks on Israelis, foreigners in Algeria, tourists in Egypt, and the other groups in Lebanon deny tax monies to governments so that those governments cannot provide adequate social services.

The radicals thus have a fundamental interest in creating a weak economy. When governments cannot provide essential services, radical groups can move into niche areas such as health services and education at relatively low cost, and that in turn has a direct impact on mass perceptions. The objective is to force large masses of people into dependency. Under these circumstances, demonstrations, strikes, and terrorist attacks, and the inevitable curfews and closures they bring with them, are not merely acts of political protest but also a primary means for preventing economic growth and creating an environment of reliance on alternative social services provided by these charities. While heavy-footed governmental or quasi-governmental organizations have difficulty adapting to such situations, the more nimble opposition, who see themselves not as functionaries but as God's messengers, are able to move quickly when social-service vacuums appear.

That is a particularly effective technique in countries where the civil service is already weak or corrupt. In Gaza, Hamas derives a double benefit from this strategy. First, suicide attacks create strong media reactions that give the organization publicity. Secondly, the violence drives down the economy of Gaza because the Israelis immediately close off the area, people lose jobs, and the economy sputters. Government taxation then becomes virtually nil. Under these conditions, the services that Hamas provides tend to be of better quality and more efficient, and the Palestinian public knows this. Any public anger at failures by Islamic organizations to meet expectations is immediately directed toward Israel and the West as a whole. In other words, Hamas operates under a protective umbrella that allows it to take credit for any successes and brush aside any failures through the use of convenient and easily recognizable scapegoats.

The Future

In light of this assessment, and taking as axiomatic that it is in the interest of the United States and the world that there be a stable Middle East, certain conclusions are inevitable.

First, money talks. A liberal approach concerning aid to the region by foreign donors is an integral part of the peace process. In American terms, that means the new Republican Congress will have to be less tight-fisted in practice than the rhetoric of its members would indicate. Otherwise, the U.S. administration will lose one of the primary vehicles it has for bringing the various sides together. Moreover, virtually the only way the Palestinian National Authority will have to counter Islamic fundamentalism and irredentism is to provide an economic environment that encourages growth and prosperity. In the beginning, at least, that will require steady capital infusions from outside.

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Secondly, the aforementioned donors must remain true to the World Bank's demands for accountability and transparency in spending, in spite of pressures and alarmist threats. Transparency was demanded initially because donors wanted to be informed about how their money would be spent. But the Palestinians need a working system of public accountability as much as they need cash injections because it creates public debate that then permits and encourages mid-course corrections in policy making. That, in turn, acts as a vehicle to help prevent social explosions before they occur.

Thirdly, as many developing trade and infrastructure projects as possible should be multilateral rather than bilateral. Multilateral agreements in areas such as electricity grids, telecommunications networks, and transport are stronger in the long term because they tend to create multinational and multicorporate coalitions in favor of maintaining stability. Coalitions of this sort can then put pressure on agreement members who may want to alter the situation to cope with short-term domestic crises.

Lastly, trade barriers to the entry of Middle Eastern goods into the United States and Europe should be lowered. Trade is cheaper than aid and often does more good. Much of the long-term success of the peace process will depend on the ability of outsiders to wean the region away from its previous dependence on import substitution and the overwhelming need for donor money. Rather than encouraging local industry, import substitution creates narrow-minded, xenophobic monopolies and cartels that oppose policies that could bring Middle Eastern countries into the new global economic order, where interdependence is considered a sine qua non of existence. The United States should begin working more intensely with Japan and the Europeans to create trade agreements that will foster investment and employment in the Middle East.

Inevitably, these agreements will have to be asymmetrical until the poorer countries are able to develop the industrial and commercial infrastructure they need in order to compete on even terms with the more powerful trading states. Job creation and job maintenance are critical to the future of the area. If, for example, there is eventually a full-scale crackdown on Hamas by the PLO, it might be driven less by Israel's demands for security and more by Arafat's need for revenues based on taxes on earnings. It is also possible that Syria can be encouraged to alter its current stance if it sees that its poorer neighbors are developing more quickly than it is.

The biggest task, however, may be one of education. Although driven by economics, a big and unresolved problem—and a major source of tension in the day-by-day negotiations—is that too many of the region's leaders have yet to grasp the point made last year by Shimon Peres: it is the job of politicians to serve the economy, not the economy to serve the politicians.

To the extent that the peace train picks up momentum, politicians will remain in the driver's seat. But the engine and the brakes, neither one of which is entirely under the politicians' direct control, will continue to be economics. If all those concerned pay more attention to the subject, then perhaps they will be able to negotiate the sharp turns ahead with a bit more success than they have so far.

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How Clinton Bashed Taiwan—and Why

by Jaw-ling Joanne Chang

From April 1993 to September 1994, the Clinton administration conducted the first thorough review of U.S. policy toward Taiwan since 1979, when the Carter administration shifted U.S. diplomatic recognition from the Republic of China (ROC) to the People's Republic of China (PRC). This review was needed because U.S. policy had not been adjusted during the intervening years to reflect Taiwan's growing economic importance and political achievements. In the end, however, the policy revisions made by the Clinton administration fell far below the expectations of Taiwan and its people. Indeed, from the ROC's point of view the Clinton administration's long-awaited revisions were a dud.

What Changed and What Did Not

According to a State Department background briefing by an unnamed "senior administration official," the Clinton administration intended to make the following adjustments toward Taiwan:

> Change the name of Taiwan's unofficial office in the U.S. from "The Coordination Council for North American Affairs" to "The Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States."
>
> Permit, on a case-by-case basis, high-level U.S. government officials from economic and technical agencies to visit Taiwan.
>
> Offer to establish under the auspices of AIT (American Institute in Taiwan) a subcabinet economic dialogue with Taiwan.

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> Allow meetings between high-level Taiwanese officials and U.S. officials to take place in U.S. government offices, excluding the White House, the State Department, and the Old Executive Office Building. Permit AIT officials or other U.S. officials who visit Taiwan to meet Taiwanese officials in Taiwan's government offices.
>
> Permit State Department officials, up to the level of undersecretary for economic and technical matters, to meet with representatives or officials from Taiwan in unofficial settings outside the State Department.
>
> Recognize that Taiwan has a legitimate role to play in a number of international issues, and that it is both in the general international interest and in America's own interest for Taiwan's voice to be heard by certain international organizations.
>
> Help Taiwan gain admission to international organizations that do not require statehood.[1]

At the same time that it was announcing these changes, the Clinton administration reaffirmed the following U.S. policies:

> Continue Washington's fundamental one-China policy, including adherence to the three U.S.-PRC communiqués. Ensure that the above adjustments to America's Taiwan policy in no way alter the U.S. acknowledgement that there is only one China and Taiwan is a part of China.
>
> Base the U.S. relationship with Taiwan on the Taiwan Relations Act and keep it unofficial, maintaining commercial, cultural, and other contacts with the people of Taiwan.
>
> Refuse to support Taiwan's entry into the United Nations.
>
> Provide Taiwan sufficient materiel and training for its self-defense, as mandated in the Taiwan Relations Act, while adhering to U.S. commitments under the August 17, 1982, U.S.-China Joint Communiqué.
>
> Forbid visits to the United States by Taiwan's top leadership (president, vice president, premier, and

[1] "Adjustments to U.S. Policy toward Taiwan Explained," background briefing, U.S. State Department, Sept. 7, 1994 (mimeograph).

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> vice premier), but permit them to make transit stops in the United States when necessary.[2]
>
> Ban visits to Taiwan by top leaders or high officials of the United States if they do not have an economic, commercial, or technical mission.
>
> Bar Taiwan's foreign and defense ministers from visits to Washington, D.C.[3]

According to AIT spokeswoman Jennifer Galt, this background briefing at the State Department was a "very preliminary announcement of adjustments in policy." The full implications of the review, she added, would be played out over the coming months.[4]

Why the Changes Took So Long

When Winston Lord became assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs in April 1993, the Clinton administration began its overall review of U.S. policy toward the PRC and Taiwan.[5] The first draft of the review was reportedly finished three months later, in July 1993.[6] In mid-September, President Clinton approved a new policy approach toward the PRC and signed a classified "action memorandum" implementing it.[7] By contrast, aspects of the policy review affecting Taiwan were not approved by Clinton until one year later, in September 1994. On more than one occasion, Lord informed Congress that the Taiwan policy review "is coming out within a few weeks."[8] Yet its issuance was delayed again and again, and Lord admitted that he had begun to use up his credibility on the issue. He complained that "it was essentially a matter of gridlock, also a matter of timing."[9] Finally, at a Senate hearing on September 27, 1994, Lord admitted that it had taken too long to finish the review.

But why did it take so long for the Clinton administration to announce the results of its new Taiwan policy? What were the considerations of "timing" involved in the delay? The internal decision-making process on the Taiwan

[2] As discussed below, this provision was modified to allow President Lee Teng-hui's visit to Cornell University in June 1995.

[3] "Adjustments to U.S. Policy toward Taiwan Explained," Sept. 7, 1994.

[4] *China Post*, Sept. 9, 1994.

[5] Benjamin Lu, "The Status and Prospects of Sino-American Relations," a report to the Legislative Yuan, Taipei, Sept. 17, 1994, p. 13 (mimeograph).

[6] Norman Fu, "Breakthrough of Sino-American Relations Depends on Clinton's Political Needs," *China Times*, July 8, 1994, p. 4.

[7] Kerry Dumbaugh, "China-U.S. Relations," *CRS Issue Brief*, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Jan. 7, 1994, p. 7.

[8] Winston Lord, "Balance Key to U.S. Adjustments to Its Taipei Policy," testimony before the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Sept. 27, 1994, p. 15 (mimeograph).

[9] Ibid.

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review is not known, but outsiders may reasonably infer that the chief causes of delay arose from the ups and downs—*both* the ups and downs, ironically—of U.S.-PRC relations.

China's MFN status. As noted above, the Clinton administration's China review began in April 1993. The following month Clinton announced Executive Order 12850, which extended for one year the PRC's Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) trade status but placed certain conditions on the retention of that status. Specifically, the order stipulated that the secretary of state could not recommend a further extension of the PRC's MFN status unless he determined (1) that an extension would substantially promote the freedom of emigration objectives in the Jackson-Vanik amendment to the 1974 Trade Act, and (2) that China was complying with the 1992 U.S.-PRC agreement concerning prison labor. In addition, the secretary of state was required to determine that China had made overall, significant progress with respect to the following human rights issues: adhering to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; releasing and acceptably accounting for political prisoners; ensuring humane treatment of prisoners; protecting Tibet's religious and cultural heritage; and permitting international radio and television broadcasts into China.[10]

Taiwan's case suffered from bad U.S.-PRC relations—and from attempts to better them.

In response to the Clinton administration's executive order, the PRC Foreign Ministry issued a "strong protest"—the first such protest since February 1990.[11] Thus, it seems reasonable to infer that the early stages of the administration's review took place under the cloud of PRC anger, and the United States was reluctant to improve relations with Taipei, further angering Beijing.

The Yin He *incident.* No sooner was the first draft of the Taiwan review completed in July 1993 than the U.S. Navy began following a PRC cargo ship, the *Yin He,* which U.S. officials believed to be heading to Iran, possibly with containers of chemicals used in making mustard gas and nerve toxins. The PRC government denied that the ship was carrying contraband, and indeed on September 4, when the *Yin He* was jointly inspected in Dammam by representatives of the United States, PRC, and Saudi Arabia, no evidence of any chemicals was found. The PRC Foreign Ministry issued another strong protest and demanded a public apology and financial compensation from the United States for the ship's delay.[12] Washington did not offer any apology; State Department spokesman Michael McCurry merely commented that "the inconvenience to the *Yin He* and to the governments of Saudi Arabia and China are unfortunate."[13]

[10] President, Executive Order, "Conditions for Renewal of Most-Favored-Nation Status for the PRC in 1994, Executive Order 12850," *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents,* May 31, 1993, p. 983.

[11] Dumbaugh, "China-U.S. Relations," p. 4.

[12] *Washington Post,* Sept. 5, 1993.

[13] Ibid.

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Missile exports. In August 1993, the Clinton administration formally determined that the PRC had transferred M-11 missile-related technology to Pakistan, violating guidelines set forth by the Missile Technology Control Regime, which Beijing had agreed to observe.[14] As required by the U.S. Arms Export Control Act and the Export Administration Act of 1979, the Clinton administration imposed sanctions against one Pakistani entity and eleven PRC arms-exporting entities. These sanctions involved denying, for two years, access to U.S. government contracts and export licenses for missile equipment or technology. On August 27, 1993, the PRC Foreign Ministry once again issued a strong protest, calling the U.S. sanctions "unjustifiable" and the charges "fabricated."[15]

The Olympics. On July 26, 1993, by a vote of 287-99, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution opposing Beijing's request to host the summer Olympic Games in the year 2000. In August, sixty U.S. senators sent a letter to the International Olympic Committee, urging the committee to reject Beijing.[16] These congressional initiatives received much attention in the press. Consequently, when in September 1993 Beijing lost its bid to host the Olympics by only two votes, it blamed Washington for the failure.

Re-engaging the PRC. It was in this atmosphere of deteriorating U.S.-PRC relations that the administration put the final touches to its reassessment of PRC policy. The outcome was a classified "action memorandum." Reportedly drafted at meetings of senior policymakers in July 1993, it reached Clinton's desk in August and was signed by him in mid-September.[17] The new strategy it outlined was meant to halt the downward spiral in U.S. relations with a country having superpower potential.

On September 25, 1993, national security adviser Anthony Lake called in the PRC's ambassador to the United States, Li Daoyu, to inform him of the just-completed review and to propose a series of high-level meetings in the fall, including a November summit meeting in Seattle between Clinton and PRC president Jiang Zemin during the annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) nations.[18] On September 30, Secretary of State Warren Christopher met Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in New York where arrangements were made for a series of high-level visits to Beijing. Accordingly, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights John Shattuck, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshevsky, and Assistant Secretary of Defense Charles Freeman all paid visits to Beijing in advance of the 90-minute Clinton-Jiang summit on November 19.

[14] Dumbaugh, "China-U.S. Relations," p. 5.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Richard Dicker, "The Message to Beijing: Yes, Human Rights Count," *Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly*, Oct. 4, 1993, p. 12.

[17] Daniel Williams and R. Jeffrey Smith, "The White House's China-Friendly Overtures," *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, Nov. 8–14, 1993, p. 14.

[18] *Washington Post*, Nov. 20, 1994.

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PRC officials seemed initially to interpret these visits as a show of weakness. Beijing made no commitments on human rights, and a State Department official commented that "it looks like the Chinese do not think we have the guts to withdraw MFN."[19] PRC foreign minister Qian asserted that cancelling China's trade privileges would be "detrimental to both the United States and China." "We do not approve the practice of linking things with trade which have nothing to do with trade issues," he said.[20]

The Clinton-Jiang meeting was described as "frank and forthright," diplomatic jargon for a stalemate. Little progress was made on human rights, trade, and weapons proliferation issues. Jiang emphasized "the importance of noninterference in the internal affairs of other nations," China's traditional response to outside demands for improvements in human rights conditions.

Thus, in the summer and fall of 1993, the Clinton administration's review of Taiwan policy was sidetracked first by the deterioration of relations between Beijing and Washington and then by Washington's desperate attempt to patch things up. U.S. officials did not want to antagonize Beijing during this period, certainly not for the sake of Taiwan.

MFN—again. During the winter of 1993 and the spring of 1994, the Clinton administration was too preoccupied with the difficult question of renewing the PRC's MFN status to concentrate on the Taiwan review. Washington's re-engagement policy toward Beijing had achieved nothing, and Clinton was forced to choose between backing down on his campaign pledge to advance human rights, or damaging U.S.-PRC relations further. In the end, the president backed down by renewing Beijing's MFN status and proclaiming that it was no longer useful to link human rights with the PRC's MFN extension.[21]

North Korea. On May 26, 1994, national security advisor Anthony Lake was asked by a reporter about the status of the Taiwan policy review: "Now that the MFN issue is out of the way, are you going to move on with that policy review, which I understand, because of the MFN debate, has been sort of put on hold?" Lake replied that "I think it will be moving along in the next few weeks."[22] Instead of a few weeks, however, it took Washington over three more months to conclude the review. This time the excuse was Korea. When North Korea's alleged development of nuclear weapons reached a crisis stage in the spring of 1994, Washington dispatched improved Patriot air-defense missiles to South Korea, augmented its naval forces, and called for the resumption of "Team Spirit," the joint U.S.–South Korean military exercise. In addition, the United States was seriously considering the option of imposing economic sanctions against Pyongyang to curb its nuclear ambitions.

[19] Williams and Smith, "The White House's China-Friendly Overtures," p. 14.

[20] *Washington Post*, Nov. 20, 1994.

[21] "The President's News Conference on May 26, 1994," *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, May 30, 1994, p. 1167.

[22] Anthony Lake, "Press Briefing by National Security Advisor Tony Lake," Office of the Press Secretary, White House, May 26, 1994, p. 7 (mimeograph).

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But sanctions against North Korea would be meaningless without the assistance of Beijing. The PRC is North Korea's largest economic partner, with total trade estimated at around $900 million in 1993. China also accounts for three-fourths of the energy and food imported by the North.[23] Former secretary of state James Baker III pointed out that Washington needed China to influence North Korea and that Beijing was well aware of its leverage. In short, Beijing's cooperation on sanctions against North Korea was a PRC trump card—and one the PRC would certainly play.[24]

Indeed, implicitly, the Korea card had already been played on China's behalf during the MFN debate. Speaking on NBC's "Meet the Press" at the end of January 1994, Senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, noted that Beijing's backing would be crucial were Washington to request the United Nations to impose economic sanctions on North Korea. Therefore, he said, "I think using total cutoff of MFN is too heavy a weapon" to promote human rights. "Let's keep the pressure on human rights," he added, "but that is not our top priority. Our top priority has to be, in that region of the world, to prevent proliferation, to prevent the nuclear arms race."[25] President Clinton concurred. Announcing unconditional renewal of the PRC's MFN status, he said: "China has an atomic arsenal and a vote and a veto in the U.N. Security Council." And: "We share important interests, such as in a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula."[26] Clearly, if Washington would not risk Beijing's ire to promote human rights in the PRC, it would not risk Beijing's ire to honor Taiwan's achievements in human rights.

Congress wanted better relations with Taiwan but could do little.

Though the threat of war in the Pacific was greatly reduced after Jimmy Carter's trip to North Korea in mid-June 1994, the sudden death of Kim Il Sung on July 8 put uncertainty back into the North Korean crisis. Under the circumstances, it seemed natural for the Clinton administration to keep the Taiwan review on hold.

The delays end. By September 1994, the international environment had become more favorable to the United States. On July 31, 1994, the U.N. Security Council approved a resolution authorizing the use of force to remove Haiti's military leadership from power.[27] The action taken was by a vote of 12-0, with the PRC and Brazil abstaining. Before the vote, Washington was concerned that Beijing might veto the resolution. Whether or not Beijing was rewarding Clinton for his MFN decision, the PRC's leaders evidently were not sufficiently angry with Washington to frustrate it on this issue. On August 5, 1994, the United States and North Korea resumed talks about the latter's nuclear program. An "agreed statement" was issued on August 12, and Washington secured a promise

[23] James A. Baker III, "China Card: N. Korea or Human Rights," *New York Times*, Apr. 13, 1994.
[24] Ibid.
[25] *Washington Post*, Jan. 31, 1994.
[26] "The President's News Conference," p. 1166.
[27] *China News*, Aug. 2, 1994.

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from North Korea to freeze its existing nuclear program in return for new reactor technology. The two sides also agreed to exchange diplomatic representatives and reduce barriers to trade and investment as a move toward eventual full normalization of relations.[28] At the end of August, Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown visited Beijing for four days and received business contracts in China worth nearly $5 billion.[29] Thus, with the international environment and U.S.-PRC relations both on the mend, Washington finally announced its new Taiwan policy on September 7.

Congressional Pressure

But pressure from the PRC, whether explicit or implicit, was not the only force acting on the Clinton administration's policy review. The story of that review would not be complete without a description of the congressional pressure that helped to shape it.

By the time the review was undertaken, many members of Congress had concluded that U.S.-Taiwanese relations needed upgrading in light of the ROC's political and economic achievements. After all, Taiwan had become a model emerging democracy, these congressmen argued, with a free press, free elections, stable democratic institutions, and human rights protections. So if U.S. interests are well served by supporting democracy and human rights abroad, as most Americans believe, such support must entail treating the ROC and its leaders with respect and dignity.

Economically, the ROC had the twentieth-largest gross national product in the world ($220 billion in 1993) and the first- or second-largest foreign exchange reserve. It was the world's fourteenth-largest trading nation and the fifth-largest trading partner of the United States, with combined exports and imports totalling $41.4 billion.[30] This means that, despite the vast difference in population between Taiwan and the PRC (27 million versus 1.2 billion), Taiwan has annually bought over twice as much per capita from the United States as the PRC has.

But U.S. companies now face greater competition in Taiwan from Japanese and European companies. In the 1991–93 period, Europeans made numerous ministerial visits to Taipei in support of their national companies, and were awarded over $5 billion in contracts from Taiwan's Six-Year National Development Plan. U.S. companies won only $1.37 billion.[31] Obviously, U.S. businesses can no longer take for granted Taiwan's pro-American inclinations.[32] David N. Laux, president of the USA-ROC Economic Council, has cautioned

[28] *China Post*, Aug. 15, 1994.

[29] *China News*, Sept. 1, 1994.

[30] David Laux, "Prepared Testimony of Mr. David Laux," presented to the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Sept. 27, 1994, p. 2 (mimeograph).

[31] S.R. 270, 103rd Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record*, Oct. 5, 1994, p. 14234.

[32] Laux, "Prepared Testimony," p. 4.

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that U.S. dominance in Taiwan's international economic relations is diminishing. And this comes at a time when, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Taiwan's $225 billion national development plan creates the "largest market in the world today for major infrastructure projects."[33]

For both political and economic reasons, then, the U.S. Congress has been active in promoting better U.S.-Taiwanese relations. In 1994 alone, for example, various resolutions were passed in the Senate and House supporting high-level visits between Taipei and Washington and also supporting Taipei's desire to participate in the United Nations and other international organizations. In addition, Congress conducted various hearings to voice its concerns on the Taiwan issue.

High-level visits. High-level visits between officials of the ROC and other countries have been of the utmost importance in Taipei's campaign to retain an independent identity. Since 1992, European countries have aided this campaign by sending some sixty-eight cabinet-level and vice minister–level officials to visit Taiwan. No question of full diplomatic recognition was involved in these visits, since all of these countries (except the Vatican) had accorded full diplomatic recognition to the PRC. Nevertheless, during the same period, the United States sent to Taiwan only one official with cabinet rank—U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills. Hills came to Taipei in December 1992 to speak at the annual business conference of the USA-ROC Economic Council.[34]

The U.S. Congress has tried to redress the executive branch's reticence on this point. Thus, in April 1994, Congress amended the 1994–1995 Foreign Relations Authorization Act to declare that the Taiwan Relations Act takes precedence over the 1982 U.S.-PRC joint communiqué and to call for cabinet-level exchanges with Taiwan. President Clinton signed the act on May 1, 1994, but the State Department hastened to reiterate its position that Washington will continue to follow a one-China policy. State Department spokesman Michael McCurry said that Section 508 of the act was not binding and that nothing in the act interferes with the U.S. commitment to the 1982 communiqué.[35]

On May 17, 1994, Senators Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska) and Hank Brown (R-Colo.) invited ROC president Lee Teng-hui to visit their home states. But the State Department would not allow President Lee into the United States.[36] Three days later, seventy-six senators expressed their wishes for Lee to visit the United States. On August 12, 1994, thirty-seven members of the U.S. House of Representatives sent Lee a joint letter inviting him and his wife to visit Washington.[37] But the State Department continued to refuse Lee the right to visit the United States.

On July 1, 1994, Senator Brown offered an amendment to the Taiwan Relations Act in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995.

[33] Ibid., p. 3.
[34] Ibid., p. 5.
[35] *China Post*, May 18, 1994.
[36] *China News*, May 20, 1994.
[37] *China Post*, Aug. 13, 1994.

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That amendment, passed in the Senate by a voice vote, changed section 4(b)(6) of the Taiwan Relations Act by stipulating that Taiwan's president or any other high-level officials be permitted to visit the U.S. to discuss (1) trade or business with Taiwan that will reduce the U.S.-Taiwanese trade deficits; (2) prevention of nuclear proliferation; (3) threats to U.S. national security; (4) the protection of the global environment; (5) the protection of endangered species; or (6) humanitarian relief of regional disasters.[38]

It was Senator Brown's sixth attempt to amend U.S. law in this fashion.[39] In early October 1994, the amendment was approved by both the Senate and the House and was included in the Immigration and Nationality Technical Corrections Act of 1994 (H.R. 783). On October 25, 1994, President Clinton signed the bill into law, including the provision (Section 221) requiring the U.S. government to allow Taiwan's president and officials to visit the United States. Thus, this provision is legally binding. But a proviso permits the secretary of state to exclude any alien whose entry into the United States would have adverse foreign-policy consequences. And President Clinton directed Secretary of State Warren Christopher to "weigh particularly carefully the foreign policy interests of the United States in considering any application by Taiwan's leaders to visit the United States" in the six designated circumstances.[40]

Effectively, therefore, the Clinton administration had still not changed its policy. Finally, on May 2, 1995, by a vote of 396-0, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution urging the executive branch to allow President Lee to pay a private visit to the United States to attend a reunion at his alma mater, Cornell University. One week later, the Senate passed the same resolution by a vote of 97-1. The State Department had persistently refused to let Lee make this visit on the grounds that it would violate the unofficial nature of America's relations with Taiwan. But on May 22, 1995, the Clinton administration, faced with mounting pressure from Congress, reversed its policy and allowed Lee to go to Cornell.

Justifying this capitulation to political reality, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said that Americans treasure the rights of freedom and freedom of travel and believe others should enjoy these privileges as well. But he went on to note: "It would be a private visit and does not signal any change in the U.S. policy of maintaining only unofficial relations with Taiwan. Nor does it convey any change in U.S. relations with or policies toward the People's Republic of China." The United States, Burns said, will continue to abide by the three communiqués that form the basis of U.S.-PRC relations. Specifically, the United States will continue to acknowledge the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is a part of China. As for the possibility of other high-level visits by leaders from the ROC, Burns said: "Any future requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis." So much for the freedom to travel.

[38] *China Post*, Aug. 7, 1994.
[39] *China Post*, Oct. 9, 1994.
[40] *China Post*, Oct. 27, 1994.

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Miscellaneous hearings and resolutions. Apart from the matter of President Lee's visit, congressional efforts to improve U.S.-Taiwanese relations have not of themselves produced much change. Thus, on June 27, 1994, American policy toward Taiwan was discussed in a closed-door session of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. At a hearing three days later, Senator Murkowski asked Secretary Christopher when the U.S. government would begin to treat Taiwan in a reasonable manner. Secretary Christopher replied that the Clinton administration had made a "broad and deep review" of its policy toward Taiwan, and he hoped the results of the review would be released very soon.[41] He assured the committee that the administration would make some adjustments in its relationship with Taiwan, in recognition of the stunning success Taiwan has achieved in both economic and political areas. As we have seen, however, another ten weeks elapsed before the State Department formally announced the results of its policy review, and then it brought forth a mouse.

So, congressional pressure probably contributed to the final release of the policy review. Without it, the review might still be locked in the State Department's closet. But congressional pressure did not impel the administration to make substantial changes in U.S.-Taiwanese relations.

For instance, on June 10, 1994, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed a resolution stating that the U.S. president, acting through the U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations, should encourage the world body to permit Taiwan to participate fully in its activities and specialized agencies. Introduced by Senator Paul Simon (D-Ill.), this resolution noted that Taiwan has much to contribute to the work and funding of the United Nations, and that it is in the interest of the United States and world body to maintain good relations with a government and an economy as significant as that of Taiwan.[42] But, as noted above, the administration's policy review specifically rejected the idea of urging Taiwan's membership in the United Nations.

The Taiwan Card?

The policy adjustments that the Clinton administration made toward Taiwan in 1994 were a step in the right direction. But that was virtually inevitable in light of the ROC's dramatic growth in wealth and freedom, and in light of congressional pressure for improved relations. The only question, then, was whether the improvements would be major or minor. In the end, they were minor.

If the Clinton administration had wanted to make major improvements in U.S.-Taiwanese relations, it would have handled the review expeditiously and in a low-key manner. This approach would have demonstrated that the changes of policy were merely unilateral adjustments the United States had to

[41] *China Post*, July 2, 1994.
[42] *China Post*, June 16, 1994.

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make because of changing realities, not favors or disfavors subject to negotiation with Taipei or Beijing.

What the administration actually did was quite different. For eighteen months, administration spokesmen announced loudly that a review of Taiwan policy was underway and that policy changes were imminent. This long delay in bringing the review to a conclusion apparently resulted from the Clinton administration's fear of offending Beijing during the latter half of 1993 and the first half of 1994.

But one can also look at the matter another way. Perhaps the administration's dilatoriness was an attempt to play "the Taiwan card." After all, the PRC was and always will be against any upgrade in U.S.-Taiwanese relations. By holding off on announcing its policy changes toward Taiwan, Washington gave Beijing the chance to lobby for no or only minor improvements in U.S.-Taiwanese relations—in return for which, perhaps, Beijing promised to be helpful on Haiti and North Korea.

Evaluating the New Policy

The long-awaited review of U.S. policy toward Taiwan tried to please everyone: Taipei and its congressional supporters by offering improved relations; Beijing by offering only minor improvements. In fact, the result pleased no one. The administration, in fine pragmatic fashion, tried to turn this into a virtue.

The administration's view. China hands in the Clinton administration believed that U.S.-Taiwanese relations were working well and needed no upgrading. According to the unnamed senior U.S. administration official who explained the new Taiwan policy at the State Department on September 7, 1994:

> There's an old American saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." That is why we're not changing our fundamental policy, not to mention our obligations.[43]

Winston Lord put it this way on September 27, 1994, at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Taiwan policy:

> United States policy toward Taiwan has been a major bipartisan success story through several administrations. It is balanced. It is faithful to our obligations, our commitments, and our national purposes. It promotes our goals with both the PRC and with Taiwan. Relations with the PRC are official and diplomatic; with Taiwan, they are unofficial but strong. We do not believe that we can or should tamper with this successful formula. We do not seek and cannot impose a resolution of differences between Taiwan and the PRC. Nor should we permit one to manipulate us against the other.[44]

[43] "Adjustments to U.S. Policy toward Taiwan Explained," pp. 13–14.

[44] Winston Lord, "Strengthened Unofficial Ties with Taiwan in U.S. Interest," *AIT Policy File*, Oct. 13, 1994, p. 5.

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Lord noted the remarkable economic and political developments of Taiwan and allowed that they were a tribute to the people of Taiwan and their leaders. But, in a neat twist, he asserted that "They also reflect the soundness of bipartisan U.S. policies pursued through successive Administrations." Thus, by this logic, the vast changes in Taiwan did not argue for making changes in U.S. policy; on the contrary, they argued against it.

In addition, Lord admitted, "We believe it would be a serious mistake to derail this basic policy of several Administrations by introducing what China would undoubtedly perceive as officiality in our relations with Taiwan."[45]

Obviously, the Clinton administration had no desire to make fundamental changes in its policy toward Taiwan and probably had no desire to make changes at all. Had there been no pressure from the U.S. Congress and business community, the administration might well have ignored the whole idea of improving U.S. relations with Taiwan. In the event, State Department spokesman Michael McCurry tried to put the best possible face on the fact that the new policy was criticized by both sides, suggesting that that was "the best indication that we got it just about right."[46]

"No change toward Taiwan" was a major PRC victory.

Taipei's view. In the ROC, Foreign Minister Fredrick Chien expressed "disappointment" over Washington's unwillingness to back Taiwan's participation in the United Nations. The direction of change in the review, Chien stated, is "correct, but has not gone far enough."[47] Speaking at the *Business Week Asia* Chief Executive Forum in Taipei on October 6, 1994, President Lee expressed the same opinion. "We have no intention of interfering with U.S.–mainland Chinese relations, but the United States's deliberate oversight of Taiwan's burgeoning democratic system and market economy is due evidently to the United States's over-tolerance of the Chinese Communists." Lee added, "This continuing phenomenon not only diminishes the reputation of the United States as a vanguard of the world's democracies, but also impedes the movement of the Asia-Pacific region towards peace and prosperity."[48]

In some respects, one could even argue that the Clinton adjustments amount to a step backward for U.S.-Taiwanese relations. First, regarding the name change: instead of simply using the "Taipei Representative Office," the Clinton administration inserted two limiting adjectives, "economic" and "cultural." As James Lilley, former ambassador to the PRC, pointed out at a Senate hearing on September 27, 1994, U.S.-Taiwanese relations far transcend economic and cultural matters. "Clearly, this is not creative ambiguity, it is preemptive concession," he said.[49]

[45] Ibid., p. 4.
[46] *China Post*, Sept. 10, 1994.
[47] *China Post*, Sept. 9, 1994.
[48] *China Post*, Sept. 13, 1994.
[49] James Lilley, "Review of U.S. Policy toward Taiwan," testimony before the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Sept. 27, 1994, p. 4 (mimeograph).

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Secondly, despite many remarks to the contrary, the Clinton administration deviated from Washington's so-called one-China policy, as declared by the United States in the three U.S.-PRC communiqués. In the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué, the United States took the following position: "The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position." In the joint U.S.-PRC communiqués of 1979 and 1982, the United States again acknowledged "the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is a part of China." Thus, Washington's policy has been to acknowledge the one-China position of all Chinese—the Chinese on the mainland and the Chinese on Taiwan. In other words, the United States does not have its own one-China policy, it simply does not challenge Chinese one-China positions. Yet, on September 7, 1994, an unnamed senior U.S. official made mention of a one-China policy nine times during his State Department briefing, including "our one China policy" five times.[50] Does this mean Washington has adopted the PRC's one-China position as its own policy? Does it mean Washington has dropped its policy of "not challenging" the one-China position of Chinese on Taiwan's side of the Strait?

Thirdly, from Taiwan's perspective Clinton's new policy has set a bad example of offensive inequity. Taiwan's officials are barred from meetings in the White House, State Department, and the Old Executive Building, but U.S. officials are permitted to meet ROC officials in comparable government offices in Taiwan, such as the ROC Foreign Ministry, the Executive Yuan, and even the Presidential Hall. In addition, Taiwan's top leadership will not be granted "freedom of travel" in the United States, only a case-by-case permission to visit and the right to make transit stops in the United States when necessary. This unfair treatment is a loss of face in the eyes of people in Taiwan.

Fourthly, under the new policy, the Clinton administration will establish a subcabinet economic dialogue with Taiwan, under AIT auspices. But such an economic dialogue has been going on for at least twelve years.[51] So this policy that purports to be an adjustment to new realities (i.e., Taiwan's economic might) is, in fact, an overt failure to adjust to new realities.

Lastly, the new policy explicitly states that the United States does not support Taiwan's admission to the United Nations. James Lilley believes this statement was made simply to please the PRC.[52] Since Taiwan's admission to the United Nations is only a remote possibility at present, there was no reason why the administration could not have remained discreetly silent on the matter. At the least, the administration could have paired its refusal to back Taiwan's membership with explicit support for Taiwan's membership in specialized agencies, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

[50] Ibid., pp. 3–4.
[51] Ibid., p. 3.
[52] Ibid.

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In sum, the Clinton administration's long-awaited "upgrade" of Taipei-Washington relations amounts, in many respects, to a demotion.

The PRC's view. In reaction to the administration's new policy, Beijing accused Washington of "gross interference in China's internal affairs and an infringement upon its sovereignty" by allowing high-level visits from the United States to Taiwan and changing the name of Taiwan's representation in Washington.[53] On September 9, 1994, the vice foreign minister of the PRC, Liu Huaqiu, summoned U.S. Ambassador J. Stapleton Roy to express strong dissatisfaction with Washington's attempt at upgrading U.S.-Taiwanese relations.[54] And the PRC's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Shen Guofang, warned: "This will seriously, adversely affect the further development of bilateral relations."[55]

Yet Washington's 1994 policy adjustments toward Taipei do not fundamentally change U.S. relations with either the PRC or Taiwan. In light of Taiwan's tremendous economic and political achievements, "no change" in U.S.-Taiwanese relations has to be seen as something of a victory for the mainland. And Washington's public repudiations of Taiwan's application to the United Nations in the teeth of congressional opinion was among Beijing's major diplomatic successes in 1994.

And Beijing did not make even cosmetic concessions in order to obtain this result. In 1994 alone, the PRC conducted several military exercises close to Taiwan. Winston Lord stated at a Senate hearing on September 27, 1994, "We do not believe China has the capability or the intention to invade Taiwan."[56] But, he added: "I would think they are trying to remind the people on Taiwan that the independence option is dangerous and they are trying to remind third countries that, you know, don't heat up PRC-Taiwanese relations with diplomatic moves that are going to make us mad."[57] One need not be very creative to imagine which third countries Lord had in mind.

Nor is there any reason to think the PRC feels greatly obliged to help Washington on other fronts. True, it failed to veto the U.N. resolution to invade Haiti. And it may have helped the United States in North Korea, although that is not known. But it is known that the PRC intends to sell two 300-megawatt nuclear plants to Iran, even though the United States has strongly opposed this sale because of possible military applications.

Conclusion

The Clinton administration asserts that its text for setting relations with Taipei and Beijing was: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." In fact, its text seems to have been: "Nice guys finish last."

[53] *China Post*, Sept. 13, 1994.
[54] Ibid.
[55] *China Post*, Sept. 9, 1994.
[56] Lord, "Strengthened Unofficial Ties with Taiwan in U.S. Interest," p. 14.
[57] Ibid., p. 23.

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Taiwan is eager, sometimes too eager, for the good opinion of the United States. Cynics might point out that it has reason to be. Taipei depends on the United States to continue observing the Taiwan Relations Act and to provide Taiwan with sufficient arms to deter any threats to its security or the social and economic system of its people. But Taiwan's empathy with the United States (like Japan's empathy with the United States) goes deeper than strategic necessity. Over the last generation, the people of Taiwan have adopted attitudes towards politics and economics that closely reflect American attitudes. Today, there is no doubt that Taiwan (like Japan) will be on America's side in any major crisis.

By contrast, despite some economic liberalization on the mainland, the leaders in Beijing do not in any way share the political and economic outlook of the United States. And—as their flagrant violations of human rights demonstrate—they have no interest in winning the good opinion of Americans. Consequently, there is considerable doubt as to whether Beijing will cooperate with the United States in a major crisis such as the Gulf War, or in matters of basic policy such as nonproliferation.

One cannot avoid concluding that Washington feels it must appease an enemy while remaining perfectly free to bash an ungrudging friend. Such a policy may work for a time, but to say it "ain't broke" is untrue. U.S. policy is not only broke, it is morally bankrupt.

The time has come for the State Department to take a truly balanced approach toward Beijing and Taipei. Above all, the time has come for the Clinton administration to set as its standard for Taiwan policy the long-range interests of the United States, not Beijing's latest tantrum or some short-range need for the PRC's goodwill. If Washington does take long-range U.S. interests as a standard for its China policy, it will soon find that its primary interest is in having staunch allies, Taiwan not the least among them.

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Documentation

An Interview with President Lee Teng-hui Of the Republic of China on Taiwan

Preface

Since Richard Nixon's visit to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1972, U.S. relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC) have been conducted within a framework governed by four documents. The first is the Shanghai Communiqué of 1972, which stated that "all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position."[1]

The second document is the U.S.-PRC communiqué of 1979. Read to a national television audience on December 15, 1978, by then president Jimmy Carter, the communiqué stated that the United States and the PRC would resume full diplomatic relations on January 1, 1979. In the communiqué, the United States pledged (1) to recognize the PRC as the "sole legal government in China" and (2) to notify "Taiwan" that Washington was terminating both diplomatic relations and the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of China.

The third document is the Taiwan Relations Act, signed into law on April 10, 1979, and governing unofficial relations between the United States and the people of Taiwan. Under this legislation, the United States conducts its relations with Taiwan through a private corporation, the American Institute in Taiwan. The Republic of China on Taiwan conducts its U.S. relations through a similar corporation: formerly the Coordination Council for North American Affairs, now the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in the United States. The Taiwan Relations Act stated that trade, cultural, and transportation links between the two countries would continue. Moreover, in language stronger than President Carter had sought, the act declared that the United States would take unspecified actions in

[1] One must note carefully the language here. At the time of the Shanghai Communiqué, the supposedly shared "one China" policy was actually a bitter contest about which government—the ROC or the PRC—would rule all of China. And that is still the Beijing interpretation: "One China [ruled from Beijing], Two Systems [socialism for the mainland, capitalism for Taiwan]." But Taiwan now retorts: "One China [as a nation or people], Two Political Entities [the PRC and the ROC, in the process of seeking greater unity]." According to the Shanghai Communiqué, the United States does not have a "one China policy." It simply "does not challenge" the views of "all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait."

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the event of an attack on Taiwan. The Beijing government protested this last provision as "unacceptable."

In 1981, the United States considered selling advanced fighter jets to Taiwan. Beijing protested, calling such a sale a "violation of Chinese sovereignty." On January 11, the Reagan administration decided against the sale of advanced fighters but did allow Taiwan to continue co-producing the F-5E fighter, which was the mainstay of its air force. This contretemps led to the U.S.-PRC communiqué of August 17, 1982, in which the Reagan administration reaffirmed that Washington accepted Beijing as the "sole legal government of China," and reiterated that it had "no intention" of pursuing "a policy of 'two Chinas' or 'one China, one Taiwan.'"

Two great trends now call this framework into question. The first is the end of the cold war, which reduced the strategic importance of Sino-American cooperation. The second is the rapid progress made by Taipei toward economic prosperity and political democracy. A growing number of congressmen from both parties pressured first the Bush administration and then the Clinton administration to upgrade U.S.-Taiwanese relations. Not until September 7, 1994, did the State Department announce the results of the review, and when it did, the recommendations proved more cosmetic than substantive. They were not nearly enough for the friends of Taiwan, but too much for the government in Beijing.

When President Clinton, overruling his State Department, permitted ROC president Lee Teng-hui to visit his alma mater, Cornell University, to receive an honorary degree in June 1995, China recalled its U.S. ambassador and suspended various negotiations. More ominously, Beijing carried out military exercises, including missile testing in the vicinity of the Taiwan Straits. At present, neither the United States, nor the PRC, nor the ROC can comfortably predict the immediate (much less the long-run) course of Sino-American diplomacy.

What follows are three insights into the dynamics of this complicated diplomatic triangle left over from the cold war. The first is an interview with President Lee Teng-hui of the ROC, conducted last year in Taipei by Harvey Sicherman, president of the Foreign Policy Research Institute. The second is an update of that interview, obtained in the wake of Lee's controversial visit to Cornell. The third is a selection from the "eight points" speech of January 1995, which was delivered by PRC president Jiang Zemin and remains the basis of Beijing's policy. Lee's own six points of April 8, 1995, (to which he refers in the second interview) were originally a response to Jiang's speech. — *Eds.*

An Interview by Harvey Sicherman

The Republic of China on Taiwan has been much in the news lately, thanks for the most part to the great leaps forward made by the ROC under the leadership of Lee Teng-hui—and to Beijing's angry response to his initiatives.

Who is this man? Why is he so controversial? And what are his views about the relations among the PRC, the United States, and the ROC?

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I must confess straight away that I am not an expert on Asia or China. But I was given a strong insight into President Lee Teng-hui's strategy through a lengthy interview last year (which has recently been updated by some further questions). And contrary to the impression we may get from today's confusing headlines, the ROC leader *does* have a clear idea of what he wants to do. Not everyone will like it, but everyone should understand it.

The interview took place in the presidential residence, a red, late-Victorian curiosity that housed Japan's colonial governors from 1895 to 1945. The Japanese legacy, the Chinese civil war of the forties, and then the economic revolution of the seventies have been the formative experiences of modern Taiwan. They proved to be much on the mind of a man who was anxious to launch a new era for the island and, for that matter, all of China.

As I and my two colleagues (Ross H. Munro, head of FPRI's Asia Program, and Professor Walter A. McDougall, editor of *Orbis*) waited for the president in a vast reception hall, I wondered what to expect. Lee Teng-hui was educated under Japanese rule but holds an American doctorate in agricultural economics. It occurred to me that the cycle of planting and harvesting might be good training for politics. Lee had often been underestimated in his earlier career. No more! Although a native Taiwanese, he had become ruler of a government dominated by the mainland-born Kuomintang (KMT), definitely not a job for the timid.

The man who entered to greet me on the red carpet was tall, dignified, and affable. He spoke mostly in English. Unlike many public officials, when he did not wish to comment on some issues he said so. But those moments were rare. He was clearly engaged, so that our interview lasted an hour and a half—well beyond the allotted time.

I began by noting that the ROC on Taiwan seemed to be pursuing an "inner-outer" strategy, pressing simultaneously for both international recognition and a closer "pragmatic" relationship with the PRC. Was there friction in this strategy?

Lee Teng-hui laughed and said, yes, there was. Sometimes his government went too far in one direction or the other and then had to "correct." But the important element was the overall coherence of the strategy. The ROC on Taiwan had to pursue both or it could pursue neither. Better relations with the PRC would help its relations with the rest of the world, and vice versa.

He then declared that two key changes had been made that had determined the island's direction. The first was to give up the old KMT claim to be the legitimate government of all China. The second was to end the emergency martial law regime that dated from the civil war era on the mainland. Those breaks with the past made it possible for the ROC, not only to regain international flexibility, but to launch the island on the road to democracy. For the first time, the democratic constitution of the Republic of China, inspired by Sun Yat-sen and drafted under Chiang Kai-shek, could be put into practice.

In response to further questions, Lee allowed that this constitution would no doubt evolve under the impact of reality. Still, the direct election of officials, and their accountability at the local level, would proceed until democratic habits

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and expectations established themselves among the island's people. He then took up with great enthusiasm what he described as the "real role" of Taiwan in Chinese history.

President Lee pointed out that the island had been under Japanese occupation for fifty years. And since 1949, China had been divided. Peking never extended its jurisdiction to Taiwan. However, Taiwan was Chinese and could not separate itself from Chinese history. The island's role was not to *rule* China but to help inaugurate a new chapter in Chinese history.

On Taiwan today, he pointed out, there exists something unknown before: a Chinese society at once prosperous and democratic. Hence, the ROC stood in bold contrast to the "other" political system, which had produced a kind of authoritarian chaos, characterized by very uneven economic growth and an often drastic suppression of personal liberties. Taiwan, in short, was inventing a "new China" of personal freedom, personal security, and personal economic achievement in the context of a broad middle-class democracy.

I asked further about democracy on the island. The president had a plan. It was to extend democracy to the grass roots with presidential elections by direct popular vote. Lee Teng-hui's reasoning offered an insight into the new politics of Taiwan: he wanted popular support for democracy while maintaining stability.

Lee Teng-hui had referred to Taiwan as Chinese and part of Chinese civilization. I wondered whether the abrupt and rapid economic progress on the island had affected its traditional culture, as it had done in most other modern societies. Lee feared this. He had therefore become chairman of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Association, a volunteer group devoted to creating a synthesis between modernity and Chinese civilization. Indeed, he hoped that many such private groups, independent of the government, would appear. Evidently a reader of Alexis de Tocqueville, Lee had concluded that a public democracy depends on private virtues.

We returned to the subject of Taiwan's future. The president repeated his stand on major issues. A prosperous middle-class democracy was emerging in Taiwan. That was a fact. Taiwan was not governed by Beijing and had not been for a century. Another fact. Taiwan was a major economic power in Asia and the world. Yet another fact. They all added up to a new reality: a new Chinese society on Taiwan, part of a broader Chinese civilization, but under its own government. The people of Taiwan are making their choice, Lee emphasized, and it is *not* for a government like that in Beijing. This had to be respected.

The president foresaw some sort of political union with the mainland as the ultimate goal. The communist system was not popular; the Qiandao Lake massacre had shocked many Taiwanese.[2] Pragmatic, evolutionary relationships with Beijing, such as the cross-Straits arrangements governing piracy, illegal

[2] In March 1994, Taiwanese tourists were killed in an apparent mass murder on board a pleasure boat on Qiandao Lake in China's Zhejiang province.

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immigration, and employment, would work best. The Chinese in Taiwan had plenty of exposure now to life on the mainland, and they did not like it. But the Chinese on the mainland, especially the leadership, had little understanding of the new society on the island.

The president was equally adamant against Taiwan's becoming an independent country separate from China. This is a joke, he said. We do not wish to force Beijing to do anything that would be wrong for them and wrong for us. We know, he insisted, what goes beyond the limit, and there is no point in going beyond it.

He did not expect much from Beijing. Deng was fading fast, and the country was already set on a course determined by domestic economic priorities more than any other factor. The earlier "Red China" was gone: ideology did not count for much anymore.

I observed that all of this talk of evolution and transition made me suspicious. Nothing is more revolutionary than the evolutionary because people get used to the change, deem it natural, and do not turn back. In only three decades, Taiwan had become an economic powerhouse; only half a decade after martial law, its people would elect a president directly. The president said, yes, that is the best way to do it: first you improve people's standard of living and then you build the edifice of democracy upon a solid middle class. Taiwan had done this in an orderly fashion. Inevitably, economic change would require political change. True leadership was to foresee and coordinate them both to the point where political institutions rather than individuals guaranteed order.

That was what Lee wanted as his legacy: a society of democratic institutions and law not dependent on charismatic leadership for its independence, freedom, or security; locally based, not centrally directed.

He would not comment on his own political future. Nor would he suggest modifications to the constitution.

When asked about relations with the United States, the president said solemnly that his country owed a great debt to the United States for its support. He wished only for recognition by the United States of the new reality in Taiwan, which he thought Washington did not understand. He hoped Washington would begin to see its relations with Beijing and Taipei as more bilateral and less trilateral, that is, more detached. Actions to help one need not be construed as harm to the other.

The president closed by summing up what he sought to do. Sun Yat-sen, he reminded us, had effected a revolution, taking China from empire to republic in 1912. There the revolution had ended, and communism had been a tragic diversion. Now, he and Taiwan offered another road: the *evolution* from republic to democracy. It was this stable Chinese democracy that Lee wished to erect as his monument: a democracy that does not depend on one man.

The interview over, we were ushered down the long stairway and into the heat, bustle, and smoke of Taipei in mid-summer.

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Supplemental Questions of July 1995

HS: *How would you describe the character of current relations between the ROC and the Chinese mainland, especially compared to a year ago?*

Lee: The pursuit of stable and peaceful cross-Straits relations has been the consistent objective of the ROC government. We have both made headway and have encountered difficulties, as a result of differences between the political systems, ways of thinking, and expectations of each side. Speaking first of the headway that has been made: Exchanges between the two sides have continually increased since November of 1987, when the ROC government opened up travel by members of its public to the Chinese mainland to visit relatives. Over seven million visits have been made so far to the Chinese mainland by members of the public living in the Taiwan area. Last year, bilateral trade exceeded $17.8 billion; and Taiwan investment in the Chinese mainland was more than $22.6 billion. Other kinds of private-sector exchange have also greatly increased, proving that the ROC government and people are positive and sincere about promoting cross-Straits relations.

On April 8 of this year, I raised the following ideas concerning future cross-Straits relations. We should:

> 1) pursue China's reunification based on the reality that the two sides are governed respectively by two governments;
>
> 2) strengthen bilateral exchanges based on Chinese culture;
>
> 3) enhance trade and economic relations to develop a mutually beneficial and complementary relationship;
>
> 4) ensure that both sides join international organizations on an equal footing and that leaders on both sides meet in a natural setting;
>
> 5) adhere to the principle of resolving all disputes by peaceful means; and
>
> 6) jointly safeguard prosperity and promote democracy in Hong Kong and Macao.

All that is necessary is a positive response from Peking, and our side will continue to promote cross-Straits relations on the basis of these ideas.

Now as to the difficulties encountered, it is hard for cross-Straits relations to avoid being affected by suddenly occurring events, such as the Qiandao Lake incident that happened last year at the end of March, to name just one example. Recently, Peking unilaterally announced the postponement of the second round of Koo-Wang talks, making it impossible to conduct the session in Peking at the end of July as originally scheduled. The Koo-Wang talks are the highest level of meetings at the current stage of cross-Straits technical

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consultation for handling the common problems faced by cross-Straits exchanges. These talks are a formalized channel for consultation set up by both sides after many years of effort. We deeply regret the decision of the Chinese Communists to ignore the rights and interests of the people on both sides of the Straits. Nonetheless, our side will continue to prepare for holding this round of talks. We have told Peking that we are keeping the bilateral communication channel open and want peace and stability in the Taiwan area. Whether or not the talks can be resumed in the future depends completely on Peking. Our negotiating door is always open.

In summary, then, both sides should cherish the headway made in relations over many years and work together to prevent the occurrence of difficulties. We hope that the current chill in cross-Straits relations can soon thaw, and that bilateral negotiations can return to normal. This will ensure that the common interests of the people on both sides of the Straits are not harmed, and that future exchange and cooperation continue to be mapped out.

HS: *How is a decision on independence an option open to the Republic of China on Taiwan, or how is it not?*

Lee: The Republic of China has continually been a sovereign nation since its founding in 1912, a fact of existence which the international community must forthrightly acknowledge and positively affirm.

According to a number of polls, the overwhelming majority of people in the Taiwan area support the current situation and oppose Taiwan independence. So, on the basis of such popular opinion, we naturally reject a declaration of independence as a possible option.

HS: *Do you believe that your visit to the United States is symbolic of a substantive change in ROC-U.S. relations? What sort of change do you hope to see in this relationship?*

Lee: My visit to the United States was a return to my alma mater as an alumnus after an absence of twenty-seven years. It was basically an academic trip and was private in nature. We want to specially thank President Rhodes of Cornell University for his invitation and warm hospitality. I am also deeply grateful for the astute decision of President Clinton and the support of the U.S. Congress. Rather than referring to this visit as a special honor for a Cornell alumnus, it would be better to speak of it as an affirmation of the more than forty years of effort by the Republic of China on Taiwan. For this, I express thanks to the United States on behalf of all the people of my nation.

The Republic of China and the United States have shared a deep friendship for a very long time. Although we do not currently enjoy official relations, our economic, trade, and cultural relations are very close. Over the past decade or so, Taiwan has been America's sixth-largest trading partner. Last year, bilateral trade with the United States reached $42.4 billion, and the ROC was the second-largest purchaser of U.S. treasury securities. At present, some thirty-eight thousand Taiwanese students are studying in the United States. We hope that bilateral relations will continue to develop on a foundation of reciprocity and mutual benefit. We especially hope that both sides can continuously upgrade

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bilateral relations along the lines of our long-term mutual friendship and mutual interests, without the interference of a third party or too much concern about what a third party thinks. Only in this way can ROC-U.S. relations have wider room in which to develop.

HS: *The Republic of China on Taiwan is one of America's largest trading partners. Do you think that future trade growth will continue to be oriented toward the West or toward the Chinese mainland and other areas in Asia? (Some predict that the trade total between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland will soon exceed that between Taiwan and the United States.)*

Lee: The enormous size of the U.S. market, its advanced technology, and its outstanding productivity ensure that no other nation can replace America's important status in the world economy. Of this, I am very certain. For a long time, the U.S. economy has directly influenced the world economy, including the economic development of Asian-Pacific nations. The most crucial factor has been the locomotive strength of America's vast market. Economists have described the relations between the economies of the U.S., Japan, and Asian-Pacific nations as a V-formation model, namely, that the U.S. leads economic growth and brings other nations along with it.

Trade between the Republic of China and the United States is important to both sides and cannot be replaced by any other nation. I am optimistic that trade between our two nations will continue to develop. Although trade between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland and other areas of the Asia-Pacific region has indeed shown a marked tendency to increase in recent years, just as I have said before, the United States is still Taiwan's most important trade partner. In fact, over the past several years, Taiwan has consistently been the second-largest market for U.S. products in Asia, second only to Japan. Clearly, this kind of close trading relationship is certain to continue.

Given that the economically interdependent relationship with the United States is growing more and more important, the ROC government is in the midst of planning an Asia-Pacific Operations Center to spur regional economic cooperation and development. When the project is completed, it will include six major centers, including ones for manufacturing, cargo transshipment, air cargo transshipment, finance, telecommunications, and the media, respectively. At the scheduled time, Taiwan will utilize the strengths of its geographical position to become a free-trade zone (including Hong Kong and Macao) that links the Chinese mainland and the Asia-Pacific region. We welcome the participation by U.S. firms in projects related to this center, or their formation of strategic alliance with businesses from this area. During my visit to the United States, I expressed this view to some businessmen. We welcome continued discussion between the ROC and United States on how to work together to bring our plans for the Asia-Pacific Operations Center to fruition.

HS: *What is the next step in the plan for implementing democracy in the Republic of China on Taiwan?*

Lee: The current phase of the project for our objective of implementing democracy in the Republic of China is over, as so far we have done the

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following: terminated the Period of Mobilization for the Suppression of Communist Rebellion, abolished prohibitions on political parties and newspapers, retired the long-standing members of the National Assembly, re-elected members of the Legislative Yuan, and held direct, popular elections of the governor of Taiwan, as well as the mayors of Taipei and Kaohsiung. Through our efforts these past few years, we have set up a system for multiparty politics, something never experienced before in Chinese history. The Chinese people of the Taiwan area currently enjoy the same freedom of speech and guarantees of human rights as in the United States. We shall continue to promote democracy in accordance with the stipulations of the ROC Constitution. According to the current plan, the next step toward achieving democracy in the Republic of China is to direct all our efforts toward holding the direct, popular election of the ROC president and vice president in the spring of next year. After those elections are completed, and the president and vice president take office, the current phase of achieving democracy for our nation will come to a conclusion.

Jiang Zemin's 'Reunification' Speech of January 30, 1995

Comrades and friends . . . Following the celebration of the 1995 New Year's Day, the people of all ethnic groups in China are now seeing in the Spring Festival. On the occasion of this traditional festival of the Chinese nation, it is of great significance for the Taiwan compatriots in Beijing and other personages concerned to be gathered here to discuss the future of the relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits and the great cause of the peaceful reunification of the motherland. On behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council, I should like to take this opportunity to wish our twenty-one million compatriots in Taiwan a happy New Year and the best of luck.

Taiwan is an integral part of China. A hundred years ago on April 17, 1895, the Japanese imperialists, by waging a war against the corrupt government of the Qing Dynasty, forced the latter to sign the Shimonoseki Treaty of national betrayal and humiliation. Under the treaty, Japan seized Taiwan and the Penghu Islands, subjecting the people of Taiwan to colonial rule for half a century. The Chinese people will never forget this humiliating chapter of their history. Fifty years ago, together with the people of other countries, the Chinese people defeated the Japanese imperialists. October 25, 1945, saw the return of Taiwan and the Penghu Islands to China and marked the end of Japan's colonial rule over our compatriots in Taiwan. However, for reasons everybody knows, Taiwan has been severed from the Chinese Mainland since 1949. It remains the sacred mission and lofty goal of the entire Chinese people to achieve the reunification of the motherland and promote the all-round revitalization of the Chinese nation. . . .

However, what the entire Chinese people should watch out for is the growing separatist tendency and the increasingly rampant activities of the forces working for the "independence of Taiwan" on the island in recent years. Certain foreign forces have further meddled in the issue of Taiwan, interfering in China's

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internal affairs. All this not only impedes the process of China's peaceful reunification but also threatens peace, stability, and development in the Asia-Pacific region.

The current international situation is still complex and volatile, but in general, it is moving towards relaxation. All countries in the world are working out their economic strategies which face the future and taking it as a task of primary importance to increase their overall national strength, so as to take up their proper places in the world in the next century. We are pleased to see that the economies of both sides are growing. In 1997 and 1999, China will resume its exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong and Macao respectively, which will be happy events for the Chinese people of all ethnic groups, including our compatriots in Taiwan. The Chinese nation has experienced many vicissitudes and hardships, and now it is high time to accomplish the reunification of the motherland and bring about its all-round rejuvenation. This means an opportunity for both Taiwan and the entire Chinese nation. Here, I should like to state the following views and propositions on a number of important questions that have a bearing on the development of relations between the two sides and the promotion of the peaceful reunification of the motherland:

1. Adherence to the principle of one China is the basis and premise for peaceful reunification. China's sovereignty and territory must never be allowed to suffer split. We must firmly oppose any words or actions aimed at creating an "independent Taiwan," and the propositions "split the country and rule under separate regimes," "two Chinas over a certain period of time," etc., which are in contravention of the principle of one China.

2. We do not challenge the development of nongovernmental economic and cultural ties by Taiwan with other countries. Under the principle of one China and in accordance with the charters of the relevant international organizations, Taiwan has become a member of the Asian Development Bank, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, and other international economic organizations in the name of "Chinese Taipei." However, we oppose Taiwan's activities in "expanding its living space internationally," which are aimed at creating "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan." . . .

3. It has been our consistent stand to hold negotiations with the Taiwan authorities on the peaceful reunification of the motherland. Representatives from the various political parties and mass organizations on both sides of the Taiwan Straits can be invited to participate in such talks. I said in my report at the Fourteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China held in October 1992: "On the premise that there is only one China, we are prepared to talk with the Taiwan authorities about any matter, including the form that official negotiations should take, a form that would be acceptable to both sides." . . .

4. We should strive for the peaceful reunification of the motherland, since Chinese should not fight fellow Chinese. Our not undertaking to give up the use of force is not directed against our compatriots in Taiwan but against

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the schemes of foreign forces to interfere with China's reunification and to bring about the "independence of Taiwan." We are fully confident that our compatriots in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao, and those residing overseas, would understand our principled position.

5. In face of the development of the world economy in the twenty-first century, great efforts should be made to expand the economic changes and cooperation between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits so as to achieve prosperity on both sides to the benefit of the entire Chinese nation. We hold that political differences should not affect or interfere with the economic cooperation between the two sides. We shall continue to implement over a long period of time the policy of encouraging industrialists and businessmen from Taiwan to invest in the mainland and enforce the Law of the People's Republic of China for Protecting the Investment of the Compatriots of Taiwan. Whatever the circumstances may be, we shall safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of industrialists and businessmen from Taiwan. . . .

6. The splendid culture of five thousand years created by the sons and daughters of all ethnic groups of China has become the tie keeping the entire Chinese people close at heart and constitutes an important basis for the peaceful reunification of the motherland. People on both sides of the Taiwan Straits should inherit and carry forward the fine traditions of the Chinese culture.

7. The twenty-one million compatriots in Taiwan, whether born there or in other provinces, are all Chinese and our own flesh and blood. We should fully respect their lifestyle and their wish to be the masters of our country and protect all their legitimate rights and interests. The relevant departments of our party and the government, including the agencies stationed abroad, should strengthen close ties with compatriots from Taiwan, listen to their views and demands, be concerned with and take into account their interests, and make every effort to help them solve their problems. We hope that Taiwan Island enjoys social stability, economic growth, and affluence. We also hope that all political parties in Taiwan will adopt a sensible, forward-looking, and constructive attitude and promote the expansion of relations between the two sides. . . .

8. Leaders of the Taiwan authorities are welcome to pay visits in appropriate capacities. We are also ready to accept invitations from the Taiwan side to visit Taiwan. We can discuss state affairs or exchange ideas on certain questions first. Even a simple visit to the other side will be useful. The affairs of Chinese people should be handled by ourselves, something that does not take an international occasion to accomplish. Separated across the Straits, our people eagerly look forward to meeting each other. They should be able to exchange visits instead of being kept from seeing each other all their lives. . . .

The reunification of the motherland is the common aspiration of the Chinese people. The patriotic compatriots do not wish to see reunification

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delayed indefinitely. The great revolutionary forerunner of the Chinese nation, Dr. Sun Yatsen, once said: "Reunification is the hope of all nationals in China. If reunification can be achieved, the people of the whole country will enjoy a happy life; if it cannot be achieved, the people will suffer." We appeal to all Chinese to unite and hold high the great banner of patriotism, uphold reunification, oppose secession, spare no effort to promote the expansion of relations between the two sides, and facilitate the accomplishment of the reunification of the motherland. In the course of the development of the Chinese nation in the modern world, such a glorious day will surely come.

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Review Essays

India: The Peacock and the Vulture

by Paul Dennis Dickler

Democracy in India: A Hollow Shell. By Arthur Bonner et al. (Washington, D.C.: American University Press, 1994. 282 pp. $59.50; $24.50, paper.)

Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party. By Yogendra K. Malik and V. B. Singh. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994. 262 pp. $39.95.)

Rajiv Gandhi and Rama's Kingdom. By Ved Mehta. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1994. 194 pp. $20.00.)

India and the United States: Estranged Democracies. By Dennis Kux. (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1993. 514 pp. $43.95, paper.)

India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Dispute: On Regional Conflict and Its Resolution. By Robert G. Wirsing. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994. 337 pp. $45.00.)

India's Ad Hoc Arsenal: Direction or Drift in Defence Policy? By Chris Smith. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. 267 pp. $39.95.)

For nearly fifty years, political scientists and foreign-policy experts have been trying to fathom the inner workings of India—with but limited success. India remains an enigma. Consider just these puzzles.

India is allegedly the world's largest democracy, with over 900 million people living in an area less than one-third the size of the United States. But in reality, because of the persistence of the caste system—an elaborate form of discrimination—a substantial percentage of the population is de facto disenfranchised. Political instability and sectarian violence also continue to threaten the very core of the country. Is India a democracy or not? If not, then what exactly is it?

India's social and economic circumstances parallel its political condition. There is a middle class in excess of 200 million people—the world's largest—but a third of the population is living in abject poverty and another third is only slightly better off. Thanks to these political and economic conditions, it is perhaps

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not too much to say that ruling India is like trying to guide a country whose society is living in three centuries simultaneously: the elite and the middle class in the late twentieth, the poor in the late nineteenth, and the desperate and isolated rest in the eighteenth or earlier. Do India's socioeconomic realities support true democracy or not?

India's technological capability is most impressive; it has an advanced space program, a nuclear-power program complete with nuclear weapons, and a strong agricultural program. But while India possesses an advanced scientific establishment capable of mastering imposing scientific and engineering tasks, it finds itself unable to solve basic sanitation and transportation problems. India also suffers from some of the world's worst air pollution and water pollution. So is India "advanced" or not?

India has an impressive military establishment and an experienced diplomatic corps. But its relations with its neighbors range from strained to a state of near violence. For many years, though not all, the United States has tried to befriend India, believing size made India of strategic interest and democracy made it of political interest. But the Indian government has rarely reciprocated; instead, it allied itself with the losing side in the cold war and is paying dearly for so doing. How can such power and seeming skill produce such calamitous results?

Sometimes India looks as though it might move forward competitively and successfully in both the economic and the political spheres. At other times, India seems about to fly into pieces. Which, if either, is it going to be?

Today, India stands at a major crossroads, facing a "last chance" before many potential disasters become real ones. Six recent books examine several of India's pressing problems. Taken together, they shed some light on what may be.

A Successful Democracy?

Democracy in India, by Arthur Bonner et al., provides a concise, if critical, assessment of Indian democracy. In Bonner's view, the state of emergency declared by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975 marked the beginning of the dismantling of Indian democracy, while the destruction of the sixteenth-century Muslim mosque in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, in 1992 signaled the extent of democracy's decline at the hands of *Hindutva,* or Hindu domination.[1] India's gap between alleged and unrealized democracy is huge, and, for Bonner and many others, the reason is the caste system. Brahmin dominance and the chauvinistic cultural nationalism of *Hindutva* render democracy in India "a hollow shell." In Bonner's view, "elections merely serve to legitimate a caste elite with a total monopoly of power and wealth"—an elite "that without

[1] Indira Gandhi was the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru and the mother of Sanjay and Rajiv Gandhi. She was no relation to Mohandas K. Gandhi.

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hesitation, uses all its force to suppress lower-caste dissent. There is no social democracy and no equality of economic opportunity" (p. 38).

Perhaps Bonner measures India against too exacting a standard. No democracy is perfect, and despite its many frailties, India has achieved democratic successes that ought to be envied by many so-called emerging democracies in Latin America and Asia—not to mention the failing ones in Africa. India's elections are not a total charade. And any democracy that can survive in a land with 900 million people of great religious and ethnic diversity cannot be lightly dismissed.

Indeed, India's fragility can be exaggerated. Bonner cites events little known or only dimly remembered in the West—such as Operation Rhino in Assam (in which Indian armed forces raided villages and tortured suspected insurgents) and the Cauvery water dispute in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu—as illustrations of gross human rights violations by the Indian government against the country's weaker and poorer ethnic groups. But to conclude that these events exemplify forces that will "tear India apart" ignores India's history of survival. Such things have been going on for decades, and still India remains whole.

Bonner also examines women's rights in India, telling the reader that, despite some notable achievements, women remain at a great disadvantage. In parts of northern India, the ratio of women to men has dropped to 870 to 1000. In parts of Tamil Nadu, the ratio of women to men is as low as 600 females for every 1000 males. One reason is that abortion based on sex preference is widely practiced despite being illegal. In several parts of India, female infanticide is still common as well.

Relatedly, the management of India's greatest problem—overpopulation—is bound up with the treatment of women. Women are the key to the success of birth control, and their inferior status goes far to explain why population-control programs have made little headway except perhaps in Kerala and Pondicherry.

India's failure to achieve true political or economic democracy has been attributed to various causes. British economic colonialism and the mistreatment of Indians by Muslim invaders are both cited—mainly by Indians—as great stumbling blocks to true Indian democracy. But following Nehru's *Discovery of India,* Bonner fingers India's caste culture as the real source of the country's social ills. If caste culture is the root of the problems with democracy and social justice, then India faces a dismal future. For the caste system has proven extremely resistant to change. Thus, Bonner sees no solution to India's greatest problems with political and economic democracy, or with economic and social survival. He suggests, too, that nuclear war between Pakistan and India is a very real possibility as the Indian elite panics at the dissolution of the state.

While there is ample justification for pessimism, modern India has survived enormous problems for nearly fifty years. Its obituary may be premature. Other contributors to *Democracy in India* show why.

One of them, Kancha Ilaiah, a political scientist at Osmania University in Hyderabad, is a member of the "backward classes." He received his education

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and professional status through the "reservation system," a type of quota system for the lower castes. His experiences lead him to conclude that until India's lower classes are freed from the caste system, no major positive social change will take place in India. While Ilaiah reinforces Bonner's views on the deleterious nature of caste in India, he sees the continuous expansion of the reservation system as a possible solution.

Another contributor to *Democracy in India,* Suranjit Kumar Saha, served as district development commissioner for the tribal district of Ranchi in Bihar. Like Ilaiah, he writes from experience when discussing the caste system, the Brahminic social order, and tribal society. Bihar happens to be one of the most corrupt and poverty-stricken states in India. Saha also concludes that changes in the caste system are required before human rights can advance in India. Yet he, like Ilaiah, sees possible solutions. For example, Saha believes that a "network of tribal-managed finance and trade cooperatives would be needed to take over wholesale and retail trade in agricultural and forest produce and end dependency on moneylenders" (p. 79).

Governing 900 million people by democratic means is a major accomplishment.

Essayist Asghar Ali Engineer, director of the Institute of Islamic Studies in Bombay, reviews the history of conflict between Hindus and Muslims. Atrocities by both Hindus and Muslims are cited, but, the horrific descriptions notwithstanding, Engineer argues that only integration within the framework of a secular democratic society can work: "Democracy is the *sine qua non* of societies with plural religions" (p. 143). Impossible? No, says Engineer, who sees the possibility of religious and cultural coexistence within Indian society. He denies that communal violence is rooted in religion, suggesting that the perception of incompatibility is what really keeps Hindus and Muslims apart. Again, another deeply rooted, immense problem is seen by an Indian author to have a possible solution.

Lastly, Gerard Heuze writes of the Indian labor movement and its relationship with the paramilitary Hindu-extremist group Shiv Sena, and with nationalist Hinduism. He argues that the hatred of Muslims by Shiv Sena is paradoxically combined with its wish for Muslim assimilation into India. Shiv Sena does *not* define itself by its relations with Muslims, in spite of some rhetoric. In this sense, Heuze agrees with Engineer: only integration, not confrontation, can solve India's Hindu-Muslim divide.

On balance, *Democracy in India* offers an intelligent, if perhaps too critical, assessment of the state of political, economic, and social democracy in India today. Much the same can be said of Yogendra K. Malik and V.B. Singh's new volume, *Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party.* This study of the history of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and of Indian political parties in general is often very perceptive, but at times excessively harsh.

There have been two overarching views of India, its people, and its government. Mohandas K. Gandhi, a religious Hindu, believed in ethical values based on religion and a moral quality in politics. Communalism, decentralization, and cultural autonomy were parts of the Gandhian view. Jawaharlal Nehru

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believed in a rational, secular, socialist state embodying European-style nationalism and bureaucratic centralization.

Plainly, Nehru's vision has dominated until the present day. But the BJP, a Hindu nationalist party (whose spirit is neither Nehruvian nor Gandhian), has had significant success since the late 1980s.

Elections in 1991 gave the BJP control of four northern Indian states, and, although the 1993 elections were a disappointment to the party, it is still a major player. The BJP remains conservative by Indian standards, sectarian, and a proponent of *Hindutva;* it is an alternative to the centrist parties but remains vague on many economic and social issues. The BJP is much more concerned with the Ayodhya controversy—the bitter argument between Hindus and Muslims over which religion should control a site at Ayodhya held holy by both—than with poverty, housing, or literacy.

Malik is safe in asserting that Hindu nationalism "is unlikely to disappear as a major political force in the near future" (p. 240). Events in Kashmir, the Punjab, Bombay, and Ayodhya make clear that Hindu nationalism will remain prominent. Yet the BJP's minimal support in the south and northeast suggests that it lacks the ability to be a true national party. Many centrists in India still write off the BJP as inconsequential, but the BJP has already proven that it is not.

Malik offers well-documented criticisms of the mythical, nonrational elements in Hindu nationalism; the corruption and incompetence within the Congress Party; and the general ineffectiveness and incompetence of Indian politics. These criticisms point to a basic conclusion: the Indian elite has mismanaged its resources.

Nevertheless, Malik, like Bonner, takes the successes of the Indian experiment with democracy too lightly. Governing 900 million people by democratic means is a major accomplishment. India has remained a unified sovereign state for almost half a century despite its great diversity. Similarly, among all the complex variations in Hindu worship there exists some commonalty. Perhaps, after all, there is something about the Hindu-Indian management of diversity that works.

While Malik provides a well-documented analysis of the Bharatiya Janata Party and a good overview of Indian politics, India's future depends on solutions to its basic problems of overpopulation, poverty, disease, and pollution. Whether a centrist, conservative, or coalition leadership heads the state, these are the problems that must be addressed.

Widespread Poverty

In *Rajiv Gandhi and Rama's Kingdom,* Ved Mehta focuses his analysis primarily on the Congress (I) party [Indian National Congress (Indira)] and its attempts to grapple with precisely these problems. Mehta gives us more a collection of stories than an integrated argument, but the writing is spirited, engaging, and clear. As is often the case with such patchwork collections of

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shorter pieces, the title is misleading. *Rajiv Gandhi and Rama's Kingdom* is as much about Indira Gandhi as Rajiv Gandhi. It is even more about living in India and varieties of insider political gossip than it is about either Gandhi.

Of all the books reviewed here, Mehta's is perhaps the most accessible to the American public. Most of the essays in his collection first appeared in *The New Yorker,* and none requires much technical knowledge. Events and anecdotes are used as metaphors for comprehending greater India. Mehta's examples range from Sikh-Hindu relations to the Bhopal–Union Carbide disaster to the Shah Bano Begum Muslim divorce case to the Indian telephone system. In each instance, as Mehta tells a story, the Indian political and cultural landscape emerges.

To set the stage, Mehta quotes the Indian journalist Kusum Nair. Her *Blossoms in the Dust: The Human Factor in Indian Development,* published in 1961, reveals the heartbreak of rural India then and now.

> Village lanes are generally full of stagnant pools and littered with straw, cow dung, goats, sheep, and bullock carts. Drains, where they do exist . . . are green with scum and choked with dirt. Piles of rubbish, and even big boulders at times, lie undisturbed in the middle of some of the roads. . . . The usual morning sight on the roads here is not of children going to school . . . but of barefooted children of six, eight, ten, collecting dry twigs for firewood and carrying small bundles of them on their heads. . . . (p. 83)

In Mehta's view, conditions have changed little for the poor of rural India, and living conditions in the cities are far worse. The outbreak of pneumonic plague in the autumn of 1994 came as no surprise to many. The squalor, sewage, and vermin of many Indian cities create ideal circumstances for the spread of disease. The drama of Indian politics, ethnic unrest, religious turmoil, and health disasters occurs with the poverty of much of the population as a backdrop.

Mehta cites several germane statistics to fill in the canvas he paints. India's defense budget has more than doubled in the past twelve years; India boasts the world's fourth-largest army; India is the largest Third World manufacturer of major weapons; India is one of the largest arms importers in the world (p. 83). Given India's striking poverty, these activities are a breathtaking misuse of scarce resources.

In commenting on Indian democracy, Mehta also quotes B.K. Nehru, the former Indian ambassador to the United States:

> During the [Indira Gandhi] Emergency, Sanjay [Gandhi] traduced all the fragile institutions of our democracy—the civil service, the judiciary, the press, the civilian control of the military. He gave preference to this civil servant or that judge, intimidated this journalist or transferred that soldier. He therefore demoralized the whole apparatus of government. In his short life, he destroyed all the fragile democratic institutions that had been nurtured in independent India. . . . (p. 80)

In short, he elevated bad judgment to a way of life.

Mehta attacks the priorities of the Indian government, especially its obsession with defense, and wonders what might have been accomplished for

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the majority of people had the government instead stressed hygiene, sanitation, population control, pollution abatement, literacy, and economic reform. Had these priorities triumphed, might there then have been forces ready and able to combat religious extremism and Hindu chauvinism as well?

Mehta is not given to total despair. He believes that India has a new democratic tradition and that the middle class may yet succeed in saving India from the blunders of its elite. He can at least hope, and others can hope with him.

India's Foreign-Policy Record

In contrast to all the authors discussed above, Dennis Kux assumes India is indeed a democracy.[2] However, his *India and the United States* is concerned less with Indian society and domestic politics than with the history of the U.S.-Indian relationship.

Kux focuses on diplomacy, reviewing the record from the early 1940s through the early 1990s. He examines the early years of U.S.-Indian relations from Roosevelt's and Truman's views on the British-Indian relationship, to Eisenhower's well-received visit to India in 1959. Kux carefully appraises the lost opportunities of the Kennedy and Johnson years, especially the 1965–67 flood crisis and the devaluation problem. He goes on to criticize the Nixon administration's botched relationship with India and then describes many of the complexities and nuances in U.S.-Indian relations during the past twenty-five years.

India and the United States is a valuable historical overview, replete with poignant photographs, careful use of declassified documents, and important interviews, but it is otherwise analytically suspect. Kux's conclusion that the past fifty years have witnessed a frequently estranged relationship with some brief periods of sharper hostility and evanescent friendship is really no more than an obvious description. At the root of the problematic relationship, according to Kux, are diverging national security interests. Close ties between the United States and Pakistan remain to this day a problem for India, he says. India's friendship with the former Soviet Union was—at the least—an annoyance to the United States, and Indira Gandhi's policies, even more than Nehru's, irritated successive U.S. administrations. Was none of this India's doing?

Now that India's close security and political ties with the Soviets are in the past, Kux hopes for closer U.S.-Indian ties. He reasons that certain factors that heretofore prevented a complete deterioration in U.S.-Indian relations may now serve to strengthen bonds. China remains a political threat as well as a potential economic and nuclear wild card. India's difficulties with China,

[2] So, by the way, does M. Srinivas Chary in *The Eagle and the Peacock: U.S. Foreign Policy Toward India Since Independence* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), a book received too late for inclusion in this review. — *Eds.*

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combined with the increasingly important economic relationship between India and the United States, suggest common ground for a better relationship. Furthermore, Kux notes, Indian-Americans number nearly one million people. Today, more than 16 percent of the world's population is Indian; that is a very large potential market. Kux does not assume that all will go well; he knows that Pakistan is far from a dead issue and argues that Washington must meet some of India's requirements in that area. However, since Kux sees India as not only a democracy but one with the "resilience and strength of democratic institutions," he believes the odds favor improving U.S.-Indian relations (p. 450).

He is probably wrong. The troubles between the United States and India have had as much to do with cultures as with interests, and the cultures have not changed. Moreover, U.S. policy—probably erroneously—is more inclined to propitiate China than to confront it, and this propensity also suggests that economics remains more important than democracy in figuring the bottom line for U.S. ties with China and India. Washington is unlikely anytime soon to think of India as a reliable ally capable of containing China—although it is not that bad an idea.

Close ties between the United States and Pakistan remain a problem for India.

Ironically, too, Kux's assumption of Indian democracy is overshadowed by India's menacing foreign policy in the region. India's recent past of aggressive policies toward virtually all its neighbors was designed to bolster its position as the military leader of South Asia. But this effort has not only used up valuable resources needed domestically, it has chilled any sense of empathy for India in the United States. Even if India is a democracy, that alone does not conduce to a special relationship with the United States, so long as Indian foreign policy remains generally unhelpful.

One place where Indian policy has been less than constructive is Kashmir. In *India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Dispute,* Robert G. Wirsing presents an exceptional analysis of the conflict in the region. By carefully interweaving the background, the course of the unrest, and the interests, motives, and personalities, Wirsing has produced a minor masterpiece in the analysis of conflict resolution. And, as a primer on Kashmir, Wirsing's effort is the best available among recent publications. The maps, interviews, and appendix on negotiations all help the reader, particularly the non-expert, to understand this convoluted mess.

Wirsing looks specifically at issues involving boundaries, settlements, and separatism, and concludes with realistic and insightful recommendations that, were they heeded, might do all the parties some good. Wirsing's plan for India and Pakistan may be summarized as follows: India and Pakistan discard the notion that a right solution to Kashmir exists. They both make gestures that acknowledge this fact and then work toward demilitarization in the Kashmir region. India and Pakistan move away from any postures that would facilitate war between them and accept the need for "an environment congenial to the progressive realization of a more stable and secure relationship between them"

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(p. 261). Finally, they accept the fact that if a solution is ever to be found, it will have no preconditions.

As Wirsing outlines the details, it seems almost conceivable that India and Pakistan may some day do all this in pursuit of their own best interests. After two major wars and decades of conflict, India and Pakistan should both want to get beyond this issue. From the looks of things, however, they do not. And no one can make them. While the U.S. role in helping to settle this conflict could be more robust, it will always be quite limited. Wirsing understands that, too.

A Military in Disarray

If India ends up going to war over Kashmir, Chris Smith's *India's Ad Hoc Arsenal* will help observers understand in what manner, and with what weapons, the Indian military can fight. Smith provides a comprehensive review of all major Indian weapons acquisitions, a summary of India's military history since partition, and an evaluation of its various defense policies. While the Kashmir dispute is discussed, it is but one piece of the entire puzzle tackled here. As have several other India watchers, Smith concludes that India's focus on its status as a regional and would-be transregional power, rather than on strictly defensive concerns, has been the chief motivation of Indian policymakers. Overall, India's military and defense policies have been inconsistent, haphazard, and often detrimental to the best interests of the majority of Indians. That is not to say that the policies lack internal logic. Nevertheless, a military exceeding reasonable defensive needs and often exceeding economic constraints has left India with a huge debt and an overgrown military sector that is in disarray.

The evidence on this latter score is fairly compelling. For example, India had begun an extensive military escalation before the 1965 war with Pakistan and before close U.S.-Pakistani relations developed. The naval buildup in the 1960s and 1970s was inconsistent with the military needs demonstrated in 1962, 1965, and 1971. What impact would a large navy have on a war with Pakistan or China? As Smith concludes, the military buildup of the 1980s, with its resulting debt problems, speaks more to political demands and symbols of power than to legitimate defense needs. In light of current economic constraints and the loss of some supplies from Russia, India must now either search for military bargains or become a more significant producer itself. It is not certain that India can do either with much success.

Furthermore, India has been left somewhat isolated as a result of several of its actions. Among these are the country's refusal to sign the Non-Proliferation treaty, its Pokhran nuclear test in 1974, its 1988 launch of the Prithvi missile, and its 1989 launch of the surface-to-surface intermediate-range ballistic missile, the Agni. India has demonstrated its scientific and military prowess, but at the price of alienating the United States and forcing itself to be even more autarkic in military procurement and defense realms. Smith thus concludes—rightly it seems—that India has wasted defense rupees, created chaos in defense pro-

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curement, and achieved far less real security than it might have—all due to poor decision making.

That seems to be a recurring theme.

The Transformation of East-Central Europe

by Milica Z. Bookman

The Transformation of Communist Systems. By Bernard Chavance. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994. 214 pp. $54.95; $19.95, paper.)

Managing in Emerging Market Economies. Edited by Daniel Fogel. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994. 236 pp. $59.95; $17.95, paper.)

Economic Transformation in East-Central Europe and in the Newly Independent States. Edited by Gabor Hunya. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994. 275 pp. $42.00.)

Political and Economic Transformation in East Central Europe. Edited by Hanspeter Neuhold, Peter Havlik, and Arnold Suppan. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995. 354 pp. $54.95.)

In 1989, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) embarked upon a sudden dual transition from socialism to capitalism as well as from single-party systems to varieties of political pluralism. While the onset of this transformation caught nearly everyone off guard, the five years that have passed since the epochal events of 1989 provide an opportunity to begin digesting what has happened in the interim. That, in turn, provides a moment to assess U.S. policy so far and to think about future directions.

On balance, the news from East-Central Europe is mixed but still good. At the most basic level, all of the former Warsaw Pact countries have consolidated policy frameworks that emphasize their full sovereignty and that seek, to one degree or another, substantial economic and political reforms away from central planning and systems of closed elitism. From the U.S. point of view, this is good news in that it consolidates perhaps the key geopolitical fact of the end of the cold war: Russian power no longer projects into the heart of Europe. But it also poses a challenge, for East-Central Europe has become something of a vacuum between a stumbling Russia and an uncertain Europe.

To deal with this challenge effectively, U.S. policymakers need to go beyond the surface and understand in detail just what the last five years have wrought in East-Central Europe. One way to do this is to consult the plethora of academic books and articles on that region, but this is itself a daunting task.

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Five years after the onset of the transformation, the pace of publication remains frenzied, and the literature is saturated with information. Not all of it, alas, is analytically useful or even sound.

This review essay sorts through selected literature on the transformation published during 1994 and early 1995, and in so doing hopes to provide guidance to those who have a practical need for clear analysis. The text discusses the basic issues, describes what has happened, and asks pertinent questions; the particulars of the literature itself are recorded mainly in the notes. The essay does not attempt to be comprehensive; trying to cover the immense literature of this period would be entirely futile. The review is limited in geographic scope; it considers all members of the former Warsaw Pact except East Germany—Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria—but omits the extensive literature on the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. Also, this essay focuses on the major economic and political aspects of the transformation; other topics, such as the environment, crime, and energy, though important, receive but modest attention.

While the books under review differ with respect to focus, and while their assessments of progress and prognoses for the future vary as well, they all share the excitement inherent in the transformation. This transformation has offered researchers the opportunity to address new issues in old ways and old issues in new ways, and thus has forced a fundamental rethinking, theoretical as well as practical, throughout the related social sciences. Indeed, prior to 1990, there was no literature on the transition from socialism to capitalism. The only transition literature that existed dealt with the movement from capitalism to socialism, and it was written from a Marxist perspective. In addition to excitement, these books also reflect the tribulations associated with writing about a rapidly evolving subject, comparable to shooting at a moving target.

Out of the Starting Blocks

Before 1989, all CEE countries had planned economies and single-party political systems. They were tied to the Soviet Union by a variety of economic and political bonds, including membership in the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the Warsaw Pact. Their economic and political systems were comparable to Soviet ones: central planning determined resource allocation, the means of production were owned by the government, and agriculture was mostly collectivized.

Despite these common characteristics, the CEE countries exhibited some diversity in their economic and political systems, their institutional structure, and hence in economic conditions.[1] Czechoslovakia's economic system was

[1] Pretransformation systems receive much attention in Chavance and somewhat less in Hunya. See also, Robert Weiner, *Change in Eastern Europe* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1994).

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one of the most rigid of all the Soviet bloc countries: there were price distortions and heavy reliance on both the central plan and Soviet trade. However, the country did enjoy a macroeconomic balance with few shortages, low inflation rates, and modest foreign debt. It remained one of the most developed countries in Eastern Europe, although there was much regional variation between the Czech lands and Slovakia. Politically, the centralization that took place after the crushing of the Prague Spring in August 1968 never loosened, despite feeble attempts at economic reforms in subsequent decades.

In Poland during the decades prior to the transformation, industrial output fell by some 20 percent, inflation turned to hyperinflation, and the external hard-currency debt doubled. According to Gabor Hunya in "Fractions in the Economic Transformation of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland," these macroeconomic imbalances had caused "organizational chaos" by the 1980s (Hunya, p. 47). In the political sphere, the 1980s brought nineteen months of martial law under the leadership of General Wojciech Jaruzelski, while the importance of the Solidarity movement grew.

Severe hardship was pervasive, and many associated it with capitalism.

Hungary also had a high degree of foreign debt and a high domestic budget deficit, causing a drain on resources. However, the economy had experimented with reforms, beginning with the New Economic Mechanism in 1969, and had introduced more novelty in its economic system than had its CEE neighbors.

In Romania, President Nicolai Ceaucescu exhibited intense dictatorial tendencies in both the political and economic spheres while retaining very close ties to the Soviet Union. There was little effort at economics reform, and, as in Poland, the 1980s were characterized by increasingly dire economic conditions. Romania differed from other CEE countries in that it did not have an external debt, due to extreme austerity measures imposed on the population in the effort to pay it. It also developed at least a semblance of an independent foreign policy.

Throughout the interwar period, Bulgaria most closely mirrored the economic and political systems of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, while the economy suffered from chronic budget deficits and inflation, these had not reached the crisis proportions of its northern neighbors.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 sent a shock wave through East-Central Europe and spelled the end of the crisis-ridden stagnation of the regional political-economic system. Within two years, the Soviet Union proclaimed the end of communism and suffered the breakup of its imperial union. The collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe was the result of both political and economic factors: the Communist parties failed to retain their cohesion, and the planned economies were under inordinate strain. Though the reasons for the collapse are not treated at length in the books under review, Chavance notes that while the communist systems demonstrated that they were both viable and reformable, at least within limits, "their historic failure occurred ultimately because . . . institutional and organizational innovations . . . were

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blocked by the political regime and structure of ownership" (Chavance, pp. 198–99).

Beginning in 1989, economic reforms aimed at creating a market economy and capitalist relations were introduced amid dramatic political change throughout the region. The nature of these reforms is detailed below, but suffice it to say here that the difficulty of overcoming the political inertia of dependency on the state soon became clear. The old systems collapsed before the market mechanism was in place. More severe hardship became pervasive, and many associated it with the pitfalls of unbridled capitalism. In fact, according to Peter Havlik in "Challenges to Integration with the West," hardships developed partly because decades of planning and an emphasis on heavy industry in command economies distorted both economic structures and behavioral patterns. Initial strategies of transformation often entailed measures that did not fit the distorted local environments, which could not respond. Moreover, many traditional markets, such as those provided by the CMEA structure, collapsed before others could replace them (Neuhold, p. 224). As a result, recession, inflation, and unemployment emerged simultaneously and precipitated sharp decreases in the standard of living. During the first few years of the transformation, the GDP dropped in nearly all CEE countries. In 1992, the percent change in GDP was -5 percent in Hungary and the Czech Republic, -7 percent in Slovakia, -6 percent in Bulgaria, and -16 percent in Romania (Poland's GDP rose by 2 percent in 1992).[2] The initial years after 1989 were so bleak with respect to overall economic performance that Chavance, quite rightly, names the period the "Great Depression" (Chavance, p. 201).[3]

In recent years, there have been indubitable improvements in all CEE economies. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development estimated regional economic growth at 3 percent for 1994 and projects a 4 percent growth rate for 1995.[4] These rates are testimony to the fact that none of the CEE countries has swerved significantly from the reform course embarked upon in 1990, despite the setbacks suffered by reformist political parties and the nostalgia that has permeated some strata of CEE societies for the often squalid but nonetheless stable past. There is no major issue, economic or political, on which there has been significant deviation from the established course, and even governments now ruled by former communists are ruled mainly according to post-communist policy structures.

[2] "Eastern Europe: Reforms Spur Recovery," Hearings of the Subcommittee on Technology and National Security, Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress, July 15, 1994, p. 14 (mimeograph).

[3] See also, Weiner, *Change in Eastern Europe*, p. 3. Such a dismal view may be countered by a recent study by Vincent Koen, who argues that official statistics pertaining to the decrease in GDP are biased because, in a planned system, firms have an incentive to overestimate their output to fill quotas, while during capitalism, firms have an incentive to underestimate their output in order to avoid taxes. Consequently, official statistics are incorrect because GDP in CEE countries was not as high as previously reported, and it is not now as low as reported. See International Monetary Fund Staff Paper, "How Large Was the Output Collapse in Russia? Alternative Estimates and Welfare Implications" (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, Nov. 1994).

[4] Cited in *New York Times*, July 4, 1995.

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Economic Transformation

Economic reforms are not new to Eastern Europe. They have been attempted, with different degrees of success, at various times since 1945, especially in Hungary and Poland. Indeed, reforms have been so numerous, claims Chavance, that current ones are best understood in light of past ones. The reforms of the 1990s differ from those of the past in that they are broader, deeper, and fixed in a universe of major political change. These reforms include macroeconomic stabilization aimed at creating an environment conducive to further reform; price reform aimed at liberalizing prices and introducing currency convertibility; and structural and institutional reforms. The latter include microeconomic reforms such as the introduction of hard budget constraints for firms; reforms of the legal system; reforms that develop the private sector, like privatization; and reforms of the banking system.

Few generalizations can be made about present reforms in East-Central Europe because no single blueprint has been applied or adopted across the board. Each country entered the transformation process under its own special circumstances, and each has its own goals and anticipations of new institutional arrangements. Much controversy exists among CEE economists over questions of the pace and sequencing of reforms. The question of pace is described by the distinction between the "big bang," or "shock therapy," and the "gradualist approach." Adherents to the former path advocate a simultaneous, rapid application of all aspects of reform necessary for capitalism to establish itself and flourish. Those advocating a more gradual approach believe that reforms should be staggered in order to protect society from undesirable social and economic consequences.

The books under review shed light on why different countries took either the gradualist or big bang approach at various times during their transformation, and they examine the results of these choices. Poland adopted the big bang approach in January 1990.[5] Hungary and the Czech Republic adhered to the gradualist approach—as did Romania and Bulgaria.[6] With respect to sequencing, virtually all the authors agree that macroeconomic policies must precede all other reforms because they establish a stable environment, without which other reforms cannot take place. However, microeconomic reforms (including price liberalization and the restructuring of firms with respect to ownership) and institutional reforms are intricately tied to each other, and debate continues as to which should occur first.[7]

[5] This was described in Jeffrey Sachs, *Poland's Jump to the Market Economy* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994), pp. 35–77.

[6] The different approaches are discussed in Hunya and Fogel.

[7] This debate on pace and sequencing of reform is reminiscent of a similar debate in the development economics literature on the preferred method of stimulating the onset of economic development in less-developed countries. The balanced-growth approach was advocated by Paul Rosenstein-Rodan (similar to the "big bang" in the transformation literature) and rejected by Albert Hirshman, who said that if countries had the resources to engage in a balanced-growth approach, there would be no problem of underdevelopment.

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Building a Stable Foundation

The goal of macroeconomic policies in the transformation process is to stabilize the economy and provide an environment suitable for further reform. This stabilization effort consists of three interrelated components.

First, there must be fiscal discipline so that government budgets are in or near balance, since deficit spending can cause inflation and crowd out private investment. Budget deficits were high in the CEE countries because of ever-increasing subsidies (necessitated by increasing costs) while prices were kept artificially low. However, the austerity entailed by fiscal discipline tends to generate recession, making this politically unpopular and therefore difficult.[8] Since fiscal policy consists of both government spending and taxation, fiscal discipline must also entail tax reform, which underscores the close relationship between macroeconomic reforms and institutional reforms.

Price distortions still exist in almost every CEE country.

Secondly, monetary discipline is necessary to limit monetary growth and curtail credit. Most importantly, such discipline attempts to curb inflation, which was a problem both before and after 1989. Indeed, with the first liberalization of prices, pent-up demand, coupled with the inability of supply to respond, resulted in high inflation. Inflation in a transforming economic environment is double poison: not only does it cause insecurity and speculation, but it also threatens the stability of exchange rates and convertibility of currencies. To offset inflationary pressure, monetary discipline must constrain credit as well as avoid printing money on state need.

Lastly, an income policy must be introduced to restrain wages. Since wages constituted a large part of government expenditure during communism, successful wage restraint is tied to the elimination of the budget deficit. It is also critical in defeating the psychology of inflation, for more money chasing a still-limited number of goods will invariably produce demand-push inflation.

Were macroeconomic policies successful in the CEE countries? Basically, yes. With respect to fiscal discipline, the government budget was brought into surplus in most countries in the early stages of the transformation—most quickly in Poland and Hungary in 1990—but the deficit increased again in subsequent years. At this time, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) set an acceptable threshold for deficits at 5 percent of GDP, which was reached by Poland, Romania, and Slovenia in 1992 (Hunya, p. 26).

Meanwhile, macroeconomic policies restrained inflation in Poland in the early years but were less successful in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania. By 1993, inflation remained in double digits in most of the

[8] Kazimierz Laski makes an argument against balancing the budget because of the effect that an austerity budget has on economic decline. See Kazimierz Laski, "Fiscal Policy and Effective Demand During Transformation," in *Economic Transformation in East-Central Europe and in the Newly Independent States*, ed. Gabor Hunya, pp. 113–35.

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countries: Bulgaria at 64 percent, Romania at 296 percent, the Czech Republic at 19 percent, and Poland at 38 percent (Fogel, p. 17).

While obviously a problem, this is not such a bad record (except for Romania) considering the very unfavorable circumstances. Still, some of the problem is a function of skittish state policies on critical but politically sensitive issues. Thus, while all countries claim to have lifted price restrictions and eliminated subsidies, Hunya shows that price distortions still exist in almost every CEE country, especially in state housing, energy, some raw materials, and public transportation (Hunya, p. 52).

Opening Up the Markets

There are three aspects of price reform: domestic price liberalization, trade liberalization, and currency convertibility.

When domestic prices are freed from central directive, the market becomes the conduit of information and the determinant of resource scarcities, thereby replacing the planning bureau. Price liberalization gives consumers and producers the incentives to engage in market transactions and provides the signals that stimulate production and consumption. However, in order to prevent bottlenecks in the market, both consumers and producers must be able to respond to market stimuli. With respect to consumers, that requires sufficient disposable income for consumption. With respect to producers, it requires low barriers to new firms wanting to enter the market.[9] When these two conditions are met, the liberalization of domestic prices eliminates shortages as demand for goods is met with increased supply.

Moreover, when free prices help convey consumer preferences to producers, changes in consumption patterns result. This tends to bring such patterns more closely in line with those in the West, which in turn reinforces basic cultural and political dispositions (something that clearly happened in the consumer goods industry).

Prices were liberalized in Central and Eastern Europe relatively early in the transformation process. In Poland, most price controls on producer and consumer goods were lifted by late 1989, and rationing was discontinued. In Czechoslovakia, most prices were liberalized by the end of 1990. Romania freed most of its prices by May 1993. In all CEE countries, the impact of price liberalization was most evident in retail trade. Since communism failed dismally in the provision of consumer goods, it is not surprising that capitalism flourished most rapidly in retail trade, resulting in a proliferation of well-stocked shops.

Trade liberalization implies the introduction of a trade regime open to international competition, thus forcing local producers to be price competitive and technologically innovative. Trade liberalization entails the sharp reduction

[9] Such a response by firms will happen only if property rights are clearly defined within the legal system, underscoring once again the interrelationship between reforms.

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of bureaucratic restrictions and implies a diminished role for government in decision making about trade. It is intricately tied to the liberalization of domestic prices because, when domestic prices are freed, domestic demand may surpass domestic production, and imports must fill the gap. Alternatively, the domestic markets may be too small for domestic production, so the country may need to turn to outside markets to sell its goods.

What actually happened in Central and Eastern Europe with respect to trade liberalization? In Poland, an abrupt liberalization of trade in 1990 was initially successful with respect to the volume of foreign trade (over time, however, the incentive to export was lost because the exchange rate remained fixed while inflation soared).[10] Hungary was the first to reduce customs tariffs but remained more protectionist over time than other countries, while Czechoslovakia was last, liberalizing only in 1991. Hunya argues that, while exports have grown in all CEE countries since 1992, overall trade has not met expectations (Hunya, p. 53). Some of the reasons seem to bear on external conditions as much as internal ones, including the loss of trade associated with both the demise of the CMEA and U.N. sanctions against Yugoslavia, which have greatly affected Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania.

Currency convertibility is a prerequisite for free trade. Buyers of goods must be able to purchase in the global markets, which requires the conversion of domestic currency into global currencies. To enable this transaction, it is not only necessary to make the currency convertible but also to keep exchange rates stable. In most cases, the introduction of convertibility entailed a significant devaluation of the currency. In Czechoslovakia, the koruna was devalued from 14.5 per dollar to 30 per dollar in 1990 (Fogel, p. 74). Its value was pegged to a basket of Western currencies, and convertibility was introduced in 1991. In Poland, the government set an exchange rate for the zloty to coincide roughly with the black market rate and established convertibility in January 1990. Here devaluation amounted to approximately 15 percent (Fogel, p. 22).

Structural Overhaul

Major institutional reforms have also been necessary in East-Central Europe to create a healthy enterprise sector. Such reforms can be subdivided into those that help establish an environment conducive to the emergence of a private sector and those that enable privatization of enterprises. The former consist of reforms at the microlevel, reforms of the legal system, and reforms of the financial sector.

Microeconomic reforms, such as the introduction of hard budget constraints and bankruptcy procedures for firms, were necessary because most firms in communist countries operated under a system of government subsidies that distorted their true economic performance. In the absence of subsidies,

[10] Gabor Hunya, introduction to *Economic Transformation*, ed. Gabor Hunya, p. 5.

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only solvent firms can survive free prices and respond to market incentives. Moreover, the introduction of clear bankruptcy procedures forces financial discipline at the microlevel.

Effective bankruptcy legislation depends in part on changes in both the banking and legal systems. It is a task of such magnitude that only Hungary adopted stiff bankruptcy laws: by mid-1992, seven thousand companies were bankrupt, affecting some 15 percent of the GDP (Hunya, p. 60). Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia have been very reluctant to bankrupt large enterprises, for fear of the political costs.

The entire legal system must be reformed in order to accommodate the new structures and institutions of the economy. Since private ownership is fundamental to the market system, laws regulating ownership are crucial. These laws pertain to the rights to use property, to enjoy income from property, and to sell or exchange property. However, there is more to legal system reforms than just protecting property rights: laws must be in place that protect the freedom to engage in economic activity; there must be a system of enforcement of contracts and a system of compensation; there must be an acceptance of the private corporation as a legal entity; there must be laws pertaining to bankruptcy, accounting, and financial disclosure; and there must be clearly formulated tax laws.

The absence of such legal structures undermines other reforms and tends to provide large advantages to old owners and managers in changing circumstances. That not only retards economic reform but tends to slow or undermine political reforms as well.

Reform of the financial sector is crucial because it gives firms access to credit on the basis of profitability and ability to pay. It can enable the government to conduct effective monetary policy; it can channel savings effectively; and it can facilitate payments. To create a financial system capable of doing all these things, a restructuring and privatizing of banks is necessary, which entails the breakup of the former monolithic banking system. Reform of the financial sector also requires extensive training to fill the skills gaps in accounting, loan appraisal, and portfolio management. Also, laws, standards, and supervisory mechanisms must exist and function consistently and predictably. Lastly, decisions must be made as to whether the financial sector will allow foreign ownership, and to what extent.

These reform steps have been taken very haltingly in East-Central Europe. Hungary privatized its bank system only in 1994. Beyond the field of banking, hesitant progress has been made in the establishment of a stock market, an important alternative to bank financing. To date, stock markets in East-Central Europe have been limited and have not succeeded in mobilizing savings or attracting a large number of listed companies or investors. Stock exchanges exist only in Budapest, Warsaw, and—as of 1993—Prague.

Once the above reforms are begun, the second step in the creation of an enterprise sector is privatization. That consists of eliminating the restrictions on the establishment of private firms, as well as restructuring and dismantling state-owned assets and firms. While both steps are important, the literature

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strongly suggests that new private businesses have a greater potential to stimulate economic growth than restructured state enterprises. This is because development of the private sector tends to improve productivity, increase the rate of growth, and raise money for the government (from the sale of state property and taxes on new establishments). However, no simple correlation seems to exist between privatization and high rates of growth. Russia, which privatized massively, has low rates of growth, while Slovenia and Poland have economies that are doing relatively well, despite sluggish privatization.

Numerous questions arise as to the best method of restructuring state-owned assets and enterprises: by what method, at what speed, and how to avoid a proliferation of small-business owners that have neither the means nor the knowledge to invest and manage? The CEE countries have exhibited much diversity in handling this task. Some (for example, the Czech Republic) adopted relatively speedy privatization programs, assuming that firms would reorganize more efficiently in private hands. Others (such as Hungary and Poland) preferred to privatize only after restructuring had already been completed by the government. The biggest problem with the second method was that large monopolies were sold intact to the private sector without an accompanying mechanism to regulate their prices.

The actual process of transferring ownership of firms also differed across countries. In the most comprehensive privatization program, that of the Czech Republic, the government gave out vouchers to citizens for some 60 percent of shares of firms. Citizens could then entrust their shares to an investment fund of their choice.

How successful have efforts at privatization actually been in CEE countries? By 1992, private sector activity as a percent of GDP was 40 percent in Poland and Hungary, under 20 percent in Czechoslovakia, and between 15 and 20 percent in Bulgaria (Fogel, pp. 24–26). By 1994, private sector output as a percent of GDP had reached these levels: in the Czech Republic, 65 percent; in Hungary, 55 percent; in Poland, 55 percent; and in Slovakia, 55 percent.[11]

Looking at the rate of privatization: by 1992, 70 percent of small retail shops were privately owned or leased in Poland; in Czechoslovakia, 12 percent of the shops were sold to private owners; in Hungary, 30 percent were sold to private owners; and in Romania, 30 percent of retail units were leased to private concerns (Fogel, p. 25). By 1994, Hungary had privatized some 40 percent of its state-owned enterprises.[12]

These numbers are not higher because of problems encountered in the privatization process. Four basic obstacles have been a focus of study for several of the authors (especially Fogel and Chavance).

[11] *The Economist*, January 21, 1995.

[12] Some sectors remained in government ownership and control, such as the energy, banking, chemical, and pharmaceutical industries. See *The Economist*, January 21, 1995.

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First, political and social support for privatization has not been sufficiently consistent or strong. For example, Hungary and Poland voted reformist governments out of office, bringing into question the entire privatization process.

Secondly, it has been difficult to define property rights. According to Fogel, buyers have to establish title to property for possible future sale. They also must comply with the tax code and raise money from credit markets to enable the sale (Fogel, p. 24).

Thirdly, there is the question of property confiscated by the Communist government and currently claimed by its past owners. Clearly, previous ownership rights must be addressed prior to new sales.

Lastly, entrepreneurship did not develop, and capital was not forthcoming, as quickly as had been expected. It was thought that entrepreneurial skills would emerge while markets were developing, but instead, the lack of capable entrepreneurs and capital became a major bottleneck in the privatization process. Only in Poland did sufficient entrepreneurship exist to stimulate economic renewal.[13] As a result of these problems, by 1995 many of the privatization programs in East-Central Europe had lost momentum. Indeed, there is evidence that Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia are all retreating on this issue, at least for the time being.[14]

Evaluating CEE Progress

It is difficult to assess the transforming economies of East-Central Europe and to rank their progress, in part because the choice of indicators is highly subjective and measurements are unreliable. How to interpret macroeconomic data and how to evaluate institutional change remain questions without agreed upon answers. There is also disagreement among scholars with respect to what is important and what is marginal, what is central and what is derivative.

A comprehensive regional assessment of the transformation is also difficult because experiences vary widely. The CEE countries have excelled in different areas at distinct times: while the Czech Republic has been most aggressive in privatization, Poland has excelled in fiscal and monetary controls; and while Hungary reformed extensively in the early years and slowed down dramatically in 1994, Bulgaria lagged behind in the onset of reforms but accelerated by 1994.

Attempts at assessment include the identification of economic indicators, such as GDP per capita, and the observation of their values before and after the onset of transformation.[15] Alternatively, it is possible to identify some indicators of the transformation process—such as price liberalization and pri-

[13] Simon Johnson and Gary Loveman, *Starting Over in Eastern Europe: Entrepreneurship and Economic Renewal* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1995).

[14] *The Economist*, January 21, 1995.

[15] This was done by Chavance. See Bernard Chavance, *The Transformation of Communist Systems*, pp. 201–12.

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vatization—and grade each country on its progress.[16] It is also possible to assess the transformation based on the speed of reform implementation and the degree to which social peace is maintained.[17]

On the basis of these criteria, the most successful countries are Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia in more or less that order. Romania and Bulgaria lag far behind. In Romania, especially, remnants of communism persist; reforms have been slow and have met with resistance. The Czech Republic and Poland have the fastest-growing economies. It seems that Poland, which engaged in the most vigorous push toward reform, suffered the least and for the least amount of time.

However, a picture of the transformation that relies solely on economic statistics is necessarily incomplete because it fails to consider the views of the participants, namely, the populations of the CEE countries. Such an assessment might be based on polling the population about its economic condition. In "Six Reformist Countries on the Road to Transformation," Gerhard Mangott and Hanspeter Neuhold discuss several polls, according to which there is no doubt that the populations of four Central European countries—Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia—view the general economic situation in 1992 as dismal in comparison with the pre-1989 period. They find their personal economic situation mostly "unsatisfactory," despite the fact that it is also termed "somewhat better," and most expect their personal economic situation in five years to be either "somewhat better" or "about equal" (Neuhold, pp. 342–44).

CEE countries have reduced welfare benefits and introduced fees for services.

Given these subjective assessments of economic reforms, two points warrant discussion. First, most scholars agree that setbacks and difficulties in the early stage of transformation are inevitable. It seems that things must get worse before they can get better. This deterioration in economic variables is all the more glaring because popular expectations held that the introduction of capitalism would have immediate, positive ramifications.

The second point follows from the first. Living conditions in the CEE countries have deteriorated in part because the safety net installed during communism has broken down. This breakdown occurred because governments have restricted spending on social services to curtail budget deficits; such restrictions are justified by the currently fashionable philosophy of capitalism, according to which the individual must assume responsibility for his own well-being. As a result, CEE countries have reduced most poverty benefits and introduced user fees for health and educational services.

[16] This was done by *The Economist*, December 3, 1994.

[17] This was done by Laszlo Bruszt. See Laszlo Bruszt, "Transformative Politics: Social Costs and Social Peace in East Central Europe," in *Transition to Capitalism? The Communist Legacy in Eastern Europe*, ed. Janos Matyas Kovacs (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1994), p. 106.

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These actions reflect a rupture in the old safety net, and there is a political cost to that rupture. While many social services during communism were inadequate, at least their existence was assured. It therefore seems logical that the institutional and structural reforms associated with the transformation must somehow include the development of a new safety net aimed at replacing the state-run system of extensive social security that existed before 1990. Without one, the transformation of the economy will have at least a short-term negative effect on the population.

Yet, oddly, few of the books reviewed address this issue seriously.[18] Fogel touches on it in passing; Chavance says that the "behavioral inertia and the weight of the inherited institutions" were so large that the rate of institutional change necessary to support social programs was much slower than expected. Thus, the resulting transitional economy is a mix of both new and old (Chavance, p. 209).

The Rough Road to Political Reform

Political transformation in the CEE countries has included the demise of communism and the introduction of a multi-party system. Political plurality has been accompanied by regular elections and decentralization of political power among various bodies of government, reflecting a representative government and competition for political office. In addition, in some countries there has been a proliferation of civil liberties, the rule of law, and free media, all of which act as a vent for a variety of views. This combination of changes has been called democratization.

As with economic reforms, there was variety in political change, in part depending on the nature of the preexisting political system, the expectations of the population, and the particular ethnic mix in the society. Some countries—notably Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic—experienced a sudden, sharp break with the party system, for the Communist Party lost power in the first post-1989 elections. Thus, in Poland, Solidarity won parliamentary elections in the summer of 1989, and Tadeusz Mazowiecki became the first post-war, noncommunist prime minister. Czechoslovakia held its first elections in June 1990, although Vaclav Havel was elected by parliament in December 1989. In Hungary, the first elections in which the Communist Party was defeated were held in spring 1990.[19]

These countries have also experienced a proliferation of new parties. For example, Poland had 160 registered political parties vying for parliamentary

[18] For a serious treatment of the safety net, see Nicholas Barr, ed., *Labor Markets and Social Policy in Central Eastern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). Barr's portrayal of the transformation as it pertains to social insurance, family support, poverty relief, health care, and education is particularly valuable to understand the psychology of reform as seen from the East-Central European street.

[19] See Weiner, *Change in Eastern Europe*; and Andrew Michta, *The Government and Politics of Postcommunist Europe* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1994).

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seats in 1991, including, among others, the Party of the Owners of Video Cassette Recorders "V" and the Polish Erotic Party.[20] These countries have also avoided some of the pitfalls associated with rapid democratization, such as the rise of political extremism and polarization. Instead, in each of these countries, one major party associated with reforms and the overthrow of communism rallied the population behind it: in Poland, it was the Democratic Union; in the Czech part of Czechoslovakia, it was the Civic Forum; in Slovakia, it was the Public Against Violence; and in Hungary, it was the Hungarian Democratic Forum.

Romania and Bulgaria democratized in a slower, more erratic fashion. The Communist parties retained power after the first elections, and it was only in later years that their power eroded. In Romania, political change in 1989 was first and foremost an anti-Ceausescu rebellion led by communists that were reincarnated into the National Salvation Front under the leadership of Ion Iliescu. In Bulgaria, the Communist Party was renamed the Bulgarian Socialist Party and managed, until early 1991, to dominate the political scene under the leadership of Petar Mladenov. Thus, it was not until some years after 1989 that the opposition, in the form of the Union of Democratic Forces led by Zhelya Zhelev, was able to emerge in the leadership.

A nostalgia for communism is very real among the populations.

Reforms of the political system do not occur in a vacuum, but are rather linked to economic reforms. This raises the question of choices about sequencing political and economic reforms. Within East-Central Europe, the countries that have had the most extensive political democratization have also had the speediest and deepest economic reforms, indicating that the congruence of the two processes reinforces both. This differs from the historical development of both capitalism and democracy. In the Western tradition, capitalism came first and was followed by democratic institutions. It is this reversal of the historical trend that made the process of transformation uncertain in East-Central Europe: "If the establishment of democratic institutions precedes capitalist development, those who suffer the unavoidable economic pains of the transition may organize themselves to block marketization."[21]

This link between economics and politics has several ramifications for the political transformation of the CEE countries. All impinge on aspects of U.S. policy.

First, as a result of economic hardships, the political will for economic reforms is wavering. The commitment to reforms by both the populations and the governments has been varied among the CEE countries. The Eurobarometer poll, commissioned by the European Union, indicates that the market economy was viewed favorably in Romania (by 71 percent of the population) and in Albania (by 67 percent). Of eighteen countries surveyed, none had a majority

[20] See Michta, *The Government and Politics of Postcommunist Europe*, p. 16.

[21] Janos Matyas Kovacs, "Introduction: Official and Alternative Legacies" in *Transition to Capitalism?* ed. Kovacs, p. xxii.

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of citizens satisfied with democratic institutions: the lowest percentage of dissatisfied citizens was recorded in the Czech Republic (53 percent) and the highest in Bulgaria (91 percent).[22] Indeed, a nostalgia for communism is very real among the populations. Respondents in a poll described by Mangott and Neuhold state: "In those days, we had little, but we could take it for granted: today, we have even less, and, still worse, we cannot be sure of it" (Neuhold, p. 341).

Secondly, despite the initial euphoria over participatory politics, a general lack of interest in politics and a public withdrawal from political participation has developed in the last few years. In Poland's local elections of 1994, only one-quarter of voters cast ballots. Voter apathy prevails in Hungary and the Czech Republic as well. Indeed, only 20 to 25 percent of Hungarians polled said that they felt voters could affect government policies.[23]

Given the disenchantment with economic reforms and the perception that political participation has not led to significant improvement, it is important to ask just how much hardship the population will tolerate, and how an unwillingness to endure hardship might manifest itself politically. Will economic hardship generate political extremism or inter-ethnic tensions? Will it result in a rise of nationalist leaders or right-wing parties, or the resuscitation of the Communist Party?

This question has been addressed directly by Paul Hockenos in his study of the rise of the political Right in East-Central Europe. He focused on the unleashed hatred and intolerance aimed at minorities, especially Jews and Gypsies, which can easily become explosive (as in Yugoslavia). In Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia, there have been political instability and political polarization because of the particular local conditions, including ethnic heterogeneity coupled with historically institutionalized bad relations among ethnic groups. Indeed, the existence of a large minority of Hungarians in Slovakia and Romania, Turks in Bulgaria, and Gypsies in all three, has been highly destabilizing in the 1990s because minorities tried to assert their influence in times of insecurity, while majorities simultaneously tried to ensure that minority rights remained minimal. Such conditions gave rise to nationalist sentiment among all groups.[24]

Despite this political instability in some CEE countries, and despite the differing paths of political development across countries, one trend has persisted and unified otherwise disparate political views. It is the unwavering commitment among both populations and governments to joining Western Europe. This seems to be the only unfaltering sentiment during a time of ambivalence and confusion, and it reflects a national consensus at a time of groping for national goals. For the CEE countries, the post-1989 period offered an opportunity to return to what they perceived to be their rightful place, namely, Europe. To

[22] OMRI Daily Digest II, Mar. 8, 1995, p. 1.

[23] Daniel Nelson, "Syndromes of Public Withdrawal in Postcommunism," *Transition*, May 1995, p. 13. This development in the political arena became evident after the books under review were written, so none of the authors addresses the issue.

[24] Paul Hockenos, *Free to Hate* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

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be a part of Europe means to be a part of the European Community (EC). A speedy envelopment by the EC would represent, not only Western acceptance, but also a definitive severance of the ties that bound the CEE countries to the east for the past five decades.

The desire to "join" Europe is also due to the realization that the CEE countries are geographically sandwiched between two large powers, Germany and Russia. While one is ascending in importance and the other is descending, their historical roles in East-Central Europe have not faded from the collective memory. Indeed, a united Germany, with its extensive investments in East-Central Europe, has surpassed all other countries in its financial, linguistic, and cultural influence. At the same time, although a much smaller Russia is separated by the buffer countries of Belorussia and Ukraine, Russian policy toward the Commonwealth of Independent States is carefully scrutinized by the East Europeans.

The U.S. Investment

During the cold war, U.S. foreign policy toward East-Central Europe focused on security issues. Concern with Soviet dominance and possible aggressive behavior dominated thinking about the area. The cold war fostered a system of alliances across the globe that provided stability and certainty, as all players knew exactly who their enemy was. This era of predictability came to an abrupt end as several events occurred in quick succession: the Soviet domination of East-Central Europe waned; the Soviet Union broke up; communist ideology lost its power; unification empowered Germany; and new states emerged. As a result, the focus of U.S. foreign policy changed in the post-communist period, as traditional concerns over conventional security issues decreased in importance.

U.S. foreign policy toward East-Central Europe currently centers on concerns about economic and political transformation. The United States is motivated to ensure the success of this transformation for several reasons. With respect to economics, the introduction of capitalism may have long-term benefits for the United States in the form of trade and investment. The transformation to a democratic political system may also benefit the United States because it implies the creation of friendly states, with consequent security advantages. (However, support for democratic institutions is risky insofar as it may bring to power exactly those whom the West is trying to remove from power, namely, communists or extreme nationalists.) Moreover, a democratic political system is perceived to safeguard the economic reforms. Lastly, to the extent that altruism is relevant in foreign relations, U.S. leaders also support the transformation because they believe it will improve the lives of the CEE populations.

These motivations to ensure a successful transformation have provided incentive for action. The United States has promoted market reforms and democracy in East-Central Europe by extending aid and encouraging trade. With respect to the former, the United States has extended human, technical,

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and financial assistance, contributing some 7 percent of total international aid during 1991–92.[25] In addition, the United States has actively aided East-Central Europe through the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) project. Most of the money from this project was allocated for economic restructuring, while a smaller amount went for improving the quality of life and strengthening democratic institutions.

Since 1994, an additional goal of the SEED program has been to alleviate some of the "reform fatigue" experienced by the populations of the region. With respect to trade, the United States has offered CEE countries the benefits of the Generalized System of Preferences, allowing their goods to enter the United States at very low duties (or none), thus making them more competitive in U.S. markets. With respect to investment, the United States has taken steps to ensure the functioning of an institutional support system for private investors in the region, such as signing bilateral investment treaties with all the CEE countries and extending assistance by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and the Trade and Development Agency.

Some six years have passed since the United States began to provide assistance to the CEE economies, allowing sufficient time for assessment. It is clear by now that, despite some successes traceable to Western technical and financial assistance, the U.S. response to the CEE transformation has been insufficient to bring about the magnitude of change originally envisioned.

To achieve those original goals, the United States should both enlarge and change the overall strategy of its assistance. Increased assistance is warranted since the West remains the principal source of capital for CEE states, as the savings generated internally are simply not adequate for investment needs. A change in strategy is required because the nature of assistance at the onset of marketization differs from what is warranted once the transformation is already in progress.

Admittedly, several dilemmas arise with respect to a new assistance strategy. First, should the focus be on capital or technical assistance? There is no single answer to that question, since some states require less technical assistance because their domestic technical capabilities have improved (such as in Poland). In other states (notably in Bulgaria), technical assistance remains imperative in order to assist in industrial structuring and private sector development.

Secondly, should the emphasis be on private or public sector assistance? While the U.S. effort has emphasized the private sector and has been successful in directly aiding private firms, it has been conspicuously absent in assisting public projects. That has proved to be an obstacle to further transformation because some projects, such as the development of infrastructure, remain in

[25] John Danyluk, "U.S. Commercial, Political and Security Relations" in *East-Central European Economies in Transition*, study papers submitted to the Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1994), p. 208.

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the public sector. A disregard for public sector projects will ultimately cause bottlenecks and create obstacles in the development of the private sector. Moreover, in addition to expanding the recipient base in East-Central Europe, it is necessary to increase coordination with local agencies in order to increase the effectiveness of the assistance and decrease the duplication of services.

Lastly, how much of the assistance should be directed through international or bilateral agencies, and how much should be through direct, private foreign investment? It is clear that, despite U.S. efforts to stimulate private foreign investment, as described above, the response of U.S. businesses has been paltry. Among the reasons for this lack of interest are a generally Russocentric investment bias, an inflated perception of an acceptable magnitude and speed of returns on investment, fear of CEE domestic instability, and inadequate legal and governmental institutional support in East-Central Europe. As a result, U.S. businesses lag behind West European firms in their interest in the CEE countries. (West European firms also have the advantages of a tradition of extensive economic ties with CEE countries and familiarity with their domestic conditions.) While the U.S. government has promoted American private investment in the region, the CEE governments must now create an environment sensitive to the concerns of American investors.

The West remains the principal source of capital for CEE states.

The United States has also participated in the development of democratic systems in East-Central Europe that will be friendly to the West and will participate in the overall security of Europe. While all Western states are interested in integrating CEE countries into the Western family of states, they are unwilling to proceed too quickly. Indeed, some five years after the dissolution of ties between the Warsaw Pact countries and the Soviet Union, new ties have not been built as quickly as the CEE leaders wanted. The United States has been promoting more integration than Western Europe seems willing to extend at this time. Achieving membership in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) takes time. By mid-1994, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia had the status of Partners in Transition (PIT) and were negotiating full membership in the OECD, while Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovenia were just negotiating PIT status. The United States has also been encouraging security ties in Europe through the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

But the most important international organization by far is NATO, and it is membership in that organization that is sought most vigorously by CEE leaders. To prepare CEE countries for NATO membership, President Clinton established the Partnership for Peace program in 1994. This program offers permanent facilities at the NATO headquarters, as well as opportunities for joint planning, military exercises, and preliminary standardization of weapons. All CEE countries joined this program. Relatedly, though there has been no transfer of U.S. defense services, some security steps have been undertaken by the United States bilaterally with individual countries, including expansion of contacts between armed forces. In short, things are moving forward in the security sphere, but not as rapidly as most CEE leaderships desire.

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Conclusion

It is clear that, from Washington's perspective, the initial euphoria from the end of the cold war has given way to a pragmatic appraisal of the role CEE countries play in U.S. foreign policy. To the extent that these countries are of interest to the United States at all, it is in their capacity as economic participants in the global economy and as buffer states between Western Europe and Russia. Economic questions of trade, investment, and assistance have dominated U.S. thinking, and questions about making the transformation successful and irreversible have overtaken traditional questions of security.

But since economic and security policies are interrelated, it is a mistake to treat them separately. They are two sides of the same coin, and, therefore, the emphasis on economic policy needs to be balanced by a more serious consideration of security questions. Indeed, the redefinition of the very scope of the West is at stake now that the cold war is over, and that stake centers on Eastern and Central Europe. These states want to become part of the West for cultural, economic, and security reasons. Economic reform will likely reward the political forces that give rise to it, and the consolidation of political democracy, in turn, will likely benefit regional security. Clearly, how well these countries' reforms succeed will influence their prospects for full integration into Western economic, political, and security institutions.

The record so far is mixed, but on balance positive. At least for some of the more important states, neither democracy nor market economies have been as hard to create as many feared. If the West, especially the United States, does not respond to these achievements by embracing and protecting them, it may squander an historic opportunity that it sought through more than forty years of the cold war.

The Un-American World of U.S. Communism

by Irving Louis Horowitz

The Secret World of American Communism. By Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov. Russian documents translated by Timothy D. Sergay. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995. 348 pp. $34.95.)

There are no secrets in this world. Historical truths can be postponed, yes, but never effaced. This is a bittersweet pill that totalitarian regimes never seem to accept—bitter in its consequences to those who want to conduct the business of the people behind their backs, sweet in its ultimate vindication of those who

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persevere in believing that, while the honesty of men can be impugned, the integrity of the historical muse will ever be served.

The Secret World of American Communism makes no attempt to be clever or overly interpretive. Its analysis is based on ninety-two documents from the early 1920s through 1945, each one a part of the secret Soviet archives of the American Communist Party. These previously secret memoranda, letters, and other classified documents demonstrate for the first time the full extent to which the American Communist Party evolved an elaborate scheme of espionage on behalf of the Soviet Union.

A number of patterns emerge. Most obvious is the complete emotional as well as ideological subservience of the American party to its "fraternal" Soviet party. There is not a single instance in which an American party leader contradicts or even expresses a strong difference at tactical levels with the Russian paymasters. If militant antimanagerialism is demanded by Stalin, that is what Eugene Dennis delivers; if a united front with bourgeois democratic forces is the "line" worked out by Georgi Dmitrov, this is what Earl Browder delivers in New York and Washington. It is all done so willingly, even enthusiastically. The one sin American Communists cannot be accused of is venality.

These are true believers, acolytes carrying their faith in communism to the American masses without ever seeming to appreciate that they have crossed the line from ideology to a secular theology run amok. Occasionally a dim recognition surfaces that more is involved in the relationship between the Communist parties of the United States and the USSR than political goals. This is the case with Earl Browder's suggestion that Marguerite Browder, his younger sister, be separated from her "valuable and satisfactory work in various European countries" because of the implied risk in revealing direct connections with "the work of our Party," and the "possible danger" in such a revelation's becoming public knowledge. The slavishness of the officials of the American Communist Party is of the mind-boggling proportions that are elsewhere evident only in the behavior of Fritz Kuhn and the American Nazi Party in the heyday of Nazism during the Hitler period.

Klehr, Haynes, and Firsov scrupulously avoid McCarthyist smear tactics. They clearly show that there were good and honorable people who retained membership in the American Communist Party long after they should have known better, but whose devotion to social justice and political action prevented them from acting on their better, more soberly realistic instincts. At the same time, the authors are careful to note that the most severe critics of American Communist practices, such as Whittaker Chambers, Elizabeth Bentley, and William Buckley, have been proven right on target. Only those for whom sentiment must always preempt evidence can walk away from these documents with even a lingering doubt that the Communist Party of the United States was a tool of the Communist Party of the USSR—and not just metaphorically, but in monetary terms as well.

The Secret World of American Communism not only confirms but disconfirms—in this case, the apologias and misinformation of others accumulated

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through the years. Janice R. MacKinnon and Stephen R. MacKinnon claimed that Agnes Smedley was a "freelance revolutionary operating on a global scale."[1] In fact, it is now clear that she was, pure and simple, a Comintern agent. They point out that the ingenuous rendition of Victor Perlo as a "New Deal economist," propagated by Victor Navasky in *The Nation* (April 8, 1978), contravenes the stated admission by the CPUSA itself, which in its official organ, *Political Affairs* (May 1981), described Perlo as being the "chairman of the Economic Commission of the CPUSA." In some cases, the legal system in the United States protected Soviet agents from harsh prosecution or public scrutiny. The authors mention the case of Judith Coplon, whose trial and conviction were overturned on a legal technicality that prevented use in court of most of the evidence garnered, presumably because it was needed by the FBI in pursuing more central figures of Communist officialdom.

These are true believers, acolytes carrying their faith in communism to the American masses.

In short, the book makes a powerful case for its views on the satellite character of the American Communist Party, especially in its high leadership ranks. The documents really speak for themselves. Earl Browder, Eugene Dennis, and William Z. Foster were involved, it turns out, in everything from money laundering for the purpose of conducting mass strikes to direct cadre supplies to Soviet agencies.

All in all, it is not a pretty picture. Particularly unnerving and disturbing are the monstrous decisions made about American volunteers to the Abraham Lincoln Batallion of the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War. On page after page we read the lists supplied by the Soviet Communists to their American puppets desecrating the memories of those who went to battle against Franco's fascism. The reports are summary—as it seems were the field executions in many cases. We read a litany of complaints that ranges from "deserter" (the most frequent) to "defeatist," "suspicious Trotskyist," "inciter," "very impulsive," "demoralizer," "mentally abnormal," "illiterate," "morally weak," "agitator and liar," "reactionary individual," "provocateur," and "cannot be trusted."

Just what happened to those men who protested conditions or who demanded leaves from the front is hard to document. Some were summarily executed. Others were disciplined and returned to the front lines. Amazingly, most men behaved courageously in battle. It is tragic to read of those who perished, not at the hands of the fascist Falange, but at the insistence of the Bolshevik handlers of the Spanish field operations. In this, the events in Spain mirrored the contemporaneous purge madness in the Soviet Union and presaged the paranoid treatment of guerillas who have questioned their own leadership in recent Third World struggles.

[1] Janice R. MacKinnon and Stephen R. MacKinnon, *Agnes Smedley: The Life and Times of an American Radical* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 142.

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The book is not without its serendipitous humor. There is the bizarre memorandum indicating that American Communists received military and political indoctrination in the International Lenin School in Moscow, where one of the main tasks was to include instruction "on the Americanness of the [CPUSA] party and the adoption of previously eschewed American patriotic symbols" (pp. 202–03). Another absurdity is a request by Eugene Dennis, who was second in command and general secretary of the American party, asking for "instructions" with respect to continued wartime participation in the affairs of the Office of Strategic Services, especially in turning over data to J. Edgar Hoover's Federal Bureau of Investigation on people "suspected of pro-Nazi fifth column activity" (pp. 272–73). And there are marvelous episodes in which Communist goons and FBI officers were both searching for the files of Jay Lovestone—apparently a true enemy of both the American and Russian peoples (pp. 129–31).

The authors are scrupulously careful not to interpret beyond the evidence from the Comintern archives. Much work remains to be done, they warn, above all the need to review Soviet intelligence archives that remain closed. One might argue that if all we can see today is the "tip of the iceberg" (pp. 332–33) why not wait a bit to retrieve more data and hence limit conjecture. There are a number of items and places—especially having to do with monetary transfers and payments—where one would have welcomed more information. And at times, the authors do not distinguish with sufficient care those who knowingly participated in spying activities from others who merely overreached themselves in their zeal to serve the party.

Lastly, one might fault the authors for not distinguishing with sufficient clarity the periods in which Americans and Soviets were in a friendly relationship from those periods when they were at loggerheads. Clearly, the impulse to spy, to betray, and to denounce was far simpler in moments of self-righteous political causes than when the lines of opposition between the two powers were clearly etched.

After such a long interval, the authors cannot be said to have made a rushed judgment, or to have in any way sensationalized their material. They did not need to resort to such chicanery: the records are sufficiently monstrous unto themselves. But this is not so much the definitive study as the start of a long process of post-communist reevaluation. Ordinary people, who deserted the CPUSA in droves when its actual mission became clear, are not the audience here. Rather, this book is for the extraordinary people, the intellectual class, those who continue to believe in the moral goodness of the good old cause. For them it is required reading.

One final observation: odd though it may seem, the collapse of the Communist Party of the USSR and the end of the hideous trail of deceit and betrayal this book paints could end up revivifying the flagging fortunes of the American Communist movement. For the first time in its long and checkered history, this party can claim that it is truly an American party, not one beholden to the Russians for subventions or for persuasions and tactics. If this is the case, and recent rumblings from the far Left indicate as much, then there exists all the more need to be vigilant against assaults on democracy, not because they

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result from obedience to a foreign power, but because they reveal a commitment to a dystopian ideology. The first such effort to separate moral fervor from political commitment was made by the New Left in the 1960s; that effort kicked up quite a storm. It would therefore be a gross error to underestimate how a new American radical leftism would play out if there is a revival of an old Left in the 1990s, shorn of the disgusting lists of mendacity and subservience outlined in *The Secret World of American Communism.*

As a publisher, I am sensitive to how easy it is for authors and reviewers both to ignore the efforts of publishers. Praise is therefore in order for Yale University Press for undertaking this remarkable project in the recovery of memory, not just archive retrieval. Under the grand leadership of John G. Ryden, Yale Press has given renewed vigor to the ideal of scholarly publishing. In an era during which all too many press directors have collapsed in the face of the mantra of race, gender, and class studies, Mr. Ryden and his staff have shown in this *Annals of Communism* series what a stiff backbone and an entrepreneurial spirit can still accomplish. One can only send up an "amen" to his press release statement that this is "not only a monumental publishing effort but also an important step in this new, post–cold war world, where Russians and Americans can work together in real cooperation."

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La Longue Durée

When did we "lose" the war in Southeast Asia? Was it in 1975, when Saigon fell, or 1972, with the flawed Paris Accords, or after Tet in 1968? Or did we lose it before it began, when we "neutralized" Laos in 1962, as Henry Kissinger recently argued in the passage from *Diplomacy* that follows. If you are inclined to agree, then read on—for an *Orbis* author had it right in 1963.

"By the coldblooded logic that marked communist strategy during the entire war, Hanoi concluded that infiltration into South Vietnam via neutral Laos and Cambodia would involve fewer international penalties than an overt thrust across the 17th Parallel. Even though the neutrality of Laos and Cambodia had been guaranteed by the Geneva Accords of 1954 and reaffirmed by the SEATO Treaty, Hanoi made its judgment stick. In effect, it annexed the panhandle of sovereign Laos and established base areas both there and in Cambodia without significant opposition from the world community. . . .

"The panhandle of Laos provided the North Vietnamese with access routes under a jungle canopy of some 650 miles along the entire border of South Vietnam with Laos and Cambodia. Over 6,000 North Vietnamese troops moved into Laos in 1959. . . .

"As a military man, Eisenhower understood that the defense of South Vietnam had to begin with Laos. He apparently told Kennedy during the transition that he was prepared to intervene in Laos, if necessary unilaterally. Kennedy's first statements on Laos were consistent with Eisenhower's.

"[But] in April 1961, shaken by the Bay of Pigs, Kennedy decided against intervention, choosing instead to rely on negotiations to buttress Laotian neutrality. Once the threat of American intervention was removed, negotiations on neutrality were certain to confirm Hanoi's stranglehold. . . . [Under the July 1962 Declaration and Protocol on the Neutrality of Laos], all foreign troops and advisers were required to be withdrawn from Laos through international checkpoints. Every Thai and American adviser left as scheduled; of the over 6,000 North Vietnamese military personnel who had moved into Laos, exactly forty (yes, forty) departed through international checkpoints. As for the remainder, Hanoi brazenly denied that they were even there. The road to South Vietnam now lay wide open.

"Eisenhower turned out to have been right. If Indochina were indeed the keystone of American security in the Pacific, as the leaders in Washington had claimed for over a decade, Laos was a better place to defend it than Vietnam; indeed, it was perhaps the only place to defend Indochina. . . ."

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In October 1963, while John F. Kennedy was still president of the United States and Ngo Dinh Diem still president of South Vietnam, *Orbis* published an article entitled "Laos and the Defense of Southeast Asia," by Frank N. Trager, a professor of international affairs at New York University. Following is an excerpt:

"Since the end of World War II, Americans have passed through a nearly continuous series of crises, most of which have stemmed from the global conflict between the Free World and the communist bloc. . . . In our anxiety to relieve the tensions created by these distant emergencies, we sometimes seek or accept solutions which return to haunt us later. The Laotian 'solution' — neutralization — proposed during the Eisenhower Administration and accepted by the Kennedy Administration is one of these expedient settlements which now looms as a serious danger to U.S. interests in Southeast Asia. At a minimum, it places a nearly insupportable burden on U.S. efforts to defend Thailand and South Vietnam. . . . The nature of the Laos–South Vietnam border makes the latter country peculiarly vulnerable to infiltration and raises the costs of its defense. Each Viet Cong infiltrator coming down the Ho Chi Minh Trail into South Vietnam requires the addition of from ten to twenty troops to the defense forces in South Vietnam. The option for that kind of escalation remains in Pathet Lao and Viet Minh hands. . . .

"This is the strategic importance of Laos: the Ho Chi Minh Trail, the long borders with Thailand, Cambodia, and South Vietnam, the valley of the Mekong, and the mountain barriers. Perhaps Laos might be depicted as a pivot around which turns the defense of the rest of the mainland. If the forces opposing communism are defeated in Laos, they will have lost the most important natural barriers to the advance of communism. With the pivot removed, greater stress would be thrown upon succeeding pivots in the more costly defense structure, and the defense by conventional means of neighboring countries would be rendered more difficult, if not in the long run impossible. . . .

"Partition of Laos would be a more effective policy for ensuring the security of what remains of Laos and the rest of mainland Southeast Asia. . . . Partition would at least permit the preservation of a part of Laos and would, if the new line is defended, add to the security of Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and especially Vietnam, where we are committed. . . . Partition would preserve [the Laotian] monarchy and the Buddhist religion. It would also provide an opportunity to shut down the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and add to the security of the rest of Southeast Asia; in particular, it would lighten the U.S. burden in South Vietnam. This would be no mean achievement."

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Auguries

Will Lucre Liberate Hanoi?

The U.S. policy of "enlargement," which purports to use trade to make free societies from unfree states, might be thought insidious in the capitals of its targets. Yet little is heard from the targets of enlargement. Are they aware of the policy? Do they fear it? Will they resist it? Last year, Hanoi produced two documents that shed light on these questions.

What Does Hanoi Know? On October 29, 1994, the Vietnamese newspaper *Quan Doi Nhan Dan (People's Army)* carried an article on "The Enlargement Strategy and the Issue of Peaceful Evolution."[1] According to the article, enlargement "calls for helping to nurture and consolidate the newly-formed democracies and market economies of important countries as conditions permit; containing the expansion and supporting the liberalization of those states where democratic institutions and market economies are not yet available; and carrying out a humanitarian program through the granting of aid as well as through realistic action to help democracy and the market economy take root in areas of humanitarian concern."

With respect to Vietnam, the article noted that it "is regarded as a member of the . . . 'market-oriented, undemocratic' countries that are shifting to a market-oriented economic strategy without implementing political democratization. It is the objective of the 'enlargement' strategy to promote reform based on the democratization process and a free market economic policy."

On the political front, the article stated, "these moves will encourage the organization of free elections, the establishment of an independent judiciary, and the formulation of human rights concepts based on Western values." Economically, "the goal is to promote free economic activities and gradually develop the private economic sector before building a local bourgeoisie that is strong enough to compete with the communists on the economic and political fronts."

Clearly, Hanoi understands enlargement full well.

Is Hanoi Concerned? Yes and no. Vietnam is not scared enough to halt U.S. trade. *People's Army* declared that "The lifting of the U.S. trade embargo against Vietnam in February 1994 and future efforts to normalize relations . . . benefit both Vietnam and the United States." But Hanoi is extremely wary of the U.S. policy: "In

[1] "U.S. Strategy of Enlargement," Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: East Asia*, Nov. 18, 1994, pp. 68–70, from Hoang Huan, "The Enlargement Strategy and the Issue of Peaceful Evolution," *Quan Doi Nhan Dan*, Oct. 29, 1994, p. 7. The quotations that follow are drawn from this article.

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the framework of the 'enlargement' strategy . . . the lifting of the embargo and the normalization of relations create better conditions to infiltrate Vietnam and carry out the 'peaceful evolution' scheme more directly and more forcefully." Thus, "reality shows that the 'peaceful evolution' scheme of the imperialist and international reactionary forces constitutes one of the four dangers now facing our country."

How Will Hanoi Resist? According to *People's Army,* "Now that we fully understand the enemy's dark schemes, we are adopting effective countermeasures to guarantee success for the national renovation cause." What are those countermeasures? On October 28, 1994, the office of Vietnam's president released a decree governing land use in Vietnam.[2] Ostensibly, the decree just reaffirmed the constitution, by declaring that all of Vietnam's land belongs to the people and is administered by the government.[3]

In fact, under Hanoi's 1993 economic reforms, "land-use rights" had rendered public ownership of the land nearly vestigial. "Vietnamese individuals and businesses were allowed to exchange, transfer, lease, mortgage and inherit land-use rights. For some types of land use a tax was charged but in most cases fees were nominal and collection poorly enforced. Indeed, many believed land-use rights were proxies for ownership."

By contrast, the new decree "reaffirms the government's ownership and control over land and converts land-use rights to leases for which rents must be paid to the government."

"Some lawyers and businessmen say the government is trying to reassert its control over the private sector. They believe conservatives in the Communist Party, fearful that the acceptance of private property rights will weaken the party's legitimacy, are using the decree to slow economic reform."

In short, Vietnam is engaged in "counter-enlargement." Less than a week after President Clinton recognized the Hanoi regime, the latter reportedly classified all trade and customs statistics as state secrets and stopped their publication.[4] We can only hope that Congress will monitor closely the progress of U.S. relations with Vietnam, as Senator Dole has pledged.

[2] "Decrees on Land Renting Provision Announced," Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: East Asia,* Nov. 1, 1994, p. 72, from Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network, Oct. 28, 1994.

[3] Adam Schwarz, "Economic Minefield," *Far East Economic Review,* Apr. 27, 1995, p. 68. The quotations that follow are drawn from this article.

[4] *Wall Street Journal,* July 17, 1995.

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